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Singing the economic blues

Musician Tom Woodward is doing it tough in Dickson, living in his car and finding fewer people willing to throw money into his guitar case. He's not alone as Canberrans feeling the pinch of rising interest rates and soaring costs slow their spending.

REPORT: PAGE 6



Picture by Elesa Kuntz

Incremental climate steps are worth it, Bowen says

Karen Barlow

Chief political correspondent

CLIMATE change minister Chris Bowen has urged nations to "stay the course" on climate action and welcomed the prospect of even "incremental change" as the world prepares to deliberate dire warnings and expected roadblocks at next week's COP28 climate conference in Dubai.

The minister's update, and calls to change climate financing, at a Lowy Institute event in Sydney comes as 2023 breaks global temperature records and the United Nations warns that the world remains on track for a near 3-degree Celsius temperature rise above pre-industrial levels this century.

The 2023 *Emissions Gap Report* by the UN Environment Programme (Unep) states that 2030 net-zero pledges are not currently considered credible. It states none of the G20 countries, including Australia, are reducing emissions at a pace consistent with their net-zero targets.

Continued Page 4

Rates pain 'working'

Adrian Rollins

Economics correspondent

RESERVE Bank of Australia governor Michele Bullock has defended the effectiveness of high interest rates in fighting inflation, amid evidence of a doubling in the number of Australians

putting off seeing a doctor because of cost.

Ms Bullock told a business forum monetary policy was in "a restrictive phase" and was working to dampen spending, but raised concerns about the nation's poor productivity performance.

In remarks that highlight-

ed the risk of more rate rises, the governor said current annual wage growth of around 4 per cent was "on the high side" unless weak productivity improved.

Data released last week showed that wages grew at an annual rate of 4 per cent in the September quarter, a

rate the central bank boss said was "not inconsistent" with the RBA's inflation target in a context of average productivity gains.

"If we don't have any productivity growth [such wage gains] are on the high side," Ms Bullock said. "They are going to contribute to rises in

costs and we know that unit labour costs ... have been rising substantially. That is not helpful for inflation."

Her comments came as newly released figures showed the proportion of patients putting off seeking health care surged last year.

Continued Page 10

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NEWS

The Canberra Times

VOLUME 98 | NUMBER 32,316

TIMES PAST

November 22, 1976

Not many tourists or visitors to the national capital are aware that you can strip off and enjoy the water and sunshine in the proximity to Kambah Pool. Locals are well aware and it can make for interesting conversation. On this day in 1976, The Canberra Times reported on the new legal approval for nudist clubs to enjoy nature in their natural state. About 50 members of the ACT Nudist Club Inc and the Brindabella Sun Club were in full uniform, wearing nothing at all, to celebrate the first Sunday of legal nude bathing in public in the ACT. The men, women and children gathered at the designated area, about one kilometre from the Kambah pool, which was declared on Friday, November 19, 1976, the only place in the ACT where nude bathing in public is legal. The weather was cold, many of the bare white bodies indicated the lack of sunshine in Canberra in the recent weeks, but a number of nude bathers took to the water



unperturbed. Getting to the area had required endurance and rock climbing skills. The president of the Brindabella Sun Club, which had a membership of about 40, Mr Keith Wood, said the thought of "peeping toms" was not an embarrassment. "If they are happy to sit up on the side of the hill fully-clothed watching us soak up the sun, that's their business," he said. Two signs announce the presence of nude people, about 50 metres from the area. The wording of the signage irritated some nudists which said: "Nude persons may be encountered beyond this point". One man said that it reminded him of signs in a zoo. Visit: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/page/14544431>



Climate Change Minister Chris Bowen. Picture AAP

Climate action opportunity slipping

From Page 1

In his Tuesday address, Mr Bowen said change is hard, urgent and necessary, but asking nations to change their economies and trajectories comes with challenges.

"It is more important than ever that we stay the course. Because even incremental change can still make substantial progress," the minister said.

"We need to recognise countries will move at different paces and on different paths, but the direction of travel is clear and agreed. And we need to stay the course."

Mr Bowen and assistant minister Jenny McAllister will lead the Australian delegation for the global event which starts on November 30. Australia's emissions reduction plan is to reach net zero by 2050 with a legislated aim to reach emission levels of 43 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030.

Despite the existential threat to civilisation and ecosystems, there was very little progress at last year's COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh, although there was provisional agreement for a climate "loss and damage" fund to compensate poorer countries.

Mr Bowen said it doesn't take much to block progress in negotiations based on consensus and reminded that the world was on track for close to 4 degrees of warming before the 2015 Paris Accord was struck.

"I don't blame those observing proceedings who will question the ability of such multilateral forums to achieve anything while some nations are so determined to block progress," Mr Bowen said.

"We are clear-eyed, but not disillusioned about the challenges of multilateralism."

The latest UN report states that for the world to get back on track for the two-degree temperature rise above pre-industrial levels, global carbon emissions in 2030 must be cut by at least 28 per cent compared to current scenarios. Bringing it to within the

Countries will move at different paces and on different paths, but the direction of travel is clear and agreed.

Climate Change Minister Chris Bowen

1.5 degree limit will require a 42 per cent cut by 2030.

The window for climate action to work is "rapidly closing" and it is now more likely than not that this key target of the Paris Agreement will be breached.

"Even in the most optimistic scenario, the likelihood of limiting warming to 1.5C is only 14 per cent," the report states.

The minister said Australia backs the Loss and Damage Fund which will be formalised at COP28 and wants to review the funding arrangements, originally set up in 1992, that ensures wealthier countries contribute more than less wealthier nations to climate action and finance.

"The world has changed a lot since 1992," Mr Bowen said.

"The list of 'annex one' countries who are required to make the larger contributions to climate finance would not be the same as it was if we were constructing that list today."

Mr Bowen said one of the key COP28 outcomes will be the first ever "Global Stocktake" on the earth's climate, a "frank assessment of where the world is at" and "where we need to go".

He also said Australia will again argue for stronger mitigation language in any global agreement while supporting a tripling of global renewables capacity and doubling of global energy efficiency efforts.

Stop making trouble over warship, China says

CHINA has told Australia to "stop making trouble" as the prime minister continues to resist opposition pressure to reveal if he raised an incident with a warship with President Xi Jinping.

Several divers from HMAS Toowoomba were in the water off the coast of Japan last Tuesday when a Chinese warship set off sonar pulses, the government says.

The divers suffered minor injuries to their ears, despite the ship warning others they were in the area.

HMAS Toowoomba was operating in international waters in support of a United Nations mission when the incident happened.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has branded the incident dangerous and unprofessional.

But China's defence ministry said its navy destroyer did not carry out any activities that might have affected the divers and "kept a safe distance from the Australian ship".

Australia's allegations were "completely inconsistent with the facts", officials said in a statement.

China always acted in accordance with international law and practice, foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said.

Canberra should "stop making trouble in front of China's doorsteps and work with China to preserve the momentum of improving and growing China-Australia ties", she added.

Opposition foreign affairs spokesman Simon Birmingham said it didn't bode well that China wasn't acknowledging what happened, despite a recently touted thawing in Australia-China diplomatic relations.

"That is very regrettable, because if you're not willing to acknowledge the facts, then it doesn't speak well for your willingness to change your behaviour," he told ABC radio on Tuesday.

It also increased the risk of an accident or miscalculation in the future and, in turn, "increases the risk of possible escalation with all of the devastating consequences that would bring to bear," Senator Birmingham said.

Opposition Leader Peter Dutton said China's response amounted to "propaganda".

"We shouldn't abide it for a second," he said.

"The fact is that there is aggressive behaviour taking place and our country should be calling it out."

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You are invited to our Friends of Ireland Irish Cultural Christmas to be held at the Canberra Irish Club on Wednesday, December 6 from 6.30-10pm. Fare will be traditional two-course dinner, music, dance and raffle hampers. Tickets \$55 per person +booking fee \$168. Bookings via <https://www.trybooking.com/CNFFQ>. Bookings close December 3. Site includes instructions about table bookings for those who wish to sit together and also notification of special dietary needs. Other enquiries contact janiceflaherty@bigpond.com

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Vaccines to target new COVID-19 variants

THE latest COVID-19 vaccines targeting common variants of the virus will be made available to Australians from next month.

Federal Health Minister Mark Butler says the government has approved the monovalent vaccines, which target Omicron variants, after taking advice from the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI).

The shots would help protect Australians against the current strains of the virus and demonstrated the government's ongoing commitment to providing the latest and most effective vaccines, Mr Butler said.

"While we are no longer in the emergency phase of this pandemic, COVID-19 is still present, and people should continue to follow the advice of the experts from ATAGI, including getting vaccines as required," he said.

However, authorities say only about a quarter of vulnerable Australians have had their 2023 booster shots amid a surge in cases.

With more than 800,000 COVID notifications so far this year, hospitalisations have dropped from more than 400 in January but are again on the rise, with about 160 people in care at the start of November.

Mr Butler said the new XBB 1.5 vaccines have been found to provide modest improved protection against the strains currently circulating in the community.

People who have already had their 2023 vaccination(s) don't need to get jabbed again in the near future and remain well protected against severe disease.



Clement Chauvin's Les Bistrionomes has been named Australia's best European restaurant. Picture by Gary Ramage

ACT shines at national awards

Karen Hardy

LES Bistrionomes and Raku have been named Australia's best European and Asian restaurants respectively in the 2023 Restaurant and Catering Industry Awards for Excellence.

It tops off a prolific year for the Campbell restaurant, says Les Bistrionomes owner and executive chef Clement Chauvin, which swept the pool in the state awards in September winning best restaurant, best European and the premium dining awards.

"It's always great to be acknowledged by these types of awards," he said. "It's a nice reward for the whole team here who have worked exceptionally hard this year, and through the past cou-

WINNERS

- Les Bistrionomes - gold, best European
- Raku - gold, best Asian
- The Boat House - silver, best contemporary
- Brunello - silver, best Italian
- National Press Club - silver, best restaurant in pub/club
- Bunny Beans Cafe - bronze, best breakfast
- The Ginger Group - bronze, best venue caterer

ple of challenging years." Les Bistrionomes also won a bronze medal in the premium dining category.

Raku won best Asian res-

taurant owner and executive chef Hao Chen said they were honoured to receive such a prestigious award.

"This isn't why we do what we do but it feels very special to be recognised," he said.

"It's so great to see Canberra restaurants recognised nationally in awards like this.

"It shows that not only can we compete with the big guys, but Canberra's restaurant scene is incredibly strong."

He said the hospitality industry has had some challenging years of late.

"The industry is changing, people are spending less, which makes running a restaurant harder than ever, but we're just as committed as we were when we started because we truly love what we

do. Awards like this just give us an extra bit of motivation to keep going."

Other ACT restaurants to win medals at the awards included: The Boat House, Barton (silver, best contemporary restaurant); Brunello, City (silver, best Italian restaurant); the National Press Club of Australia, Chatham House Restaurant, Barton (silver, best restaurant in a pub/club); Bunny Beans Cafe, Holt (bronze, breakfast restaurant); and The Ginger Group, National Arboretum, Weston (bronze, venue caterer).

Bangalay Dining at Shoalhaven Heads' luxury accommodation Bangalay Luxury Villas won a silver in the best restaurant in a hotel/resort category.

Sydney's Quay Restaurant won the nation's best restaurant award.

Restaurant and Catering chief executive officer Suresh Manickam said the association was pleased to celebrate the achievements of Australia's most distinguished operators.

"To achieve medals in the national awards is a testament to each recipient's hard work and dedication to their craft," he said. The Restaurant and Catering Awards are the only industry awards with an independent judging system. A restaurant must be a member of the association to qualify.

■ **INSIDE:** Food and Wine: Matt Preston's memoir of sex, drugs, rock and roll - and tuna pate.

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NEWS

MONEY Times are getting tougher as interest rate rises bite into spending

Economy blues: hard singing for supper

Steve Evans

BUSKER Tom Woodward is a good barometer of the state of the economy. When spending gets easier, his income goes up; when belts are tightened, his tin gets empty. And it's on empty at the moment.

"I don't make any money, which makes you think it's because the economy sucks," he said in between breaks on his amplified acoustic guitar in the shopping centre in Dickson.

No money coming in despite his obvious skill means no money to go out: he's living in a car at the moment but that evening he was on his way to look at a van.

In invisible Canberra, that counts as a step up the property ladder.

He's been busking since 1994. He comes and goes, sometimes alternating between the city and the South Coast. At the north end, he's seen change.

"It's got a lot worse in Canberra. I used to busk in Canberra 10 years ago but now there's a rental crisis. There's people living in tents," he said.

And recently, people have become less generous as the economy has tilted the wrong way.

As a busker, he now notices a reluctance. Buskers are just one of the groups of people with hats out. He doesn't blame people for not giving. "There's so many people asking for money but there's only so many people during the day you can give money to," he said.

A similar picture of people holding tighter on to their money comes from the Trove shop around the corner.

It's a cooperative made up of about 20 artists and craft-people selling their crea-

tions. Inke Falkner's specialty is wooden objects like the long, dangling ear-rings she wears behind the counter.

"It's pretty quiet," she said. "We definitely have less people coming into the store."

"A lot of people are finding it difficult to make ends meet."

What about 2024, though?

Optimistic or pessimistic?

She is of a naturally good humour, and has a smile to warm any economy, so she is loathe to say she's actually pessimistic: "I'm not pessimistic but I'm not super-optimistic either. I'm hoping for the best."

Next door is definitely pessimistic.

Proprietor Per Christensen lists a string of woes stemming from longer-term factors, like what he says is the cut-back in parking at the Dickson shopping centre. Fewer car-park spots means fewer customers in his Centrepiece store, he said.

He does not have a good word for what he calls "the

Busker Tom Woodward (above). Inke Falkner (below left) at the Trove shop. Per Christensen and Endah Silowati (below right) of Centrepiece store. Pictures by Elesza Kurtz

council" by which he means the ACT government.

But on the immediate economic prospects, he said that customers were moving down in price. "When they once wanted to buy a birthday present for \$80, now it's \$50," he said.

He makes glass ornaments and jewellery so he absorbs lower customer spending as lower profits. He has lowered costs. "We are not making products that cost hundreds of dollars. Now, it's \$60 to \$80."

And 2024? "I think it's going to be a disaster."

At this present-buying time of the year, his shop would normally be much busier, he said. "Compared to last year, it's zero."

The slow-down has been coming for a while as interest rates have risen.

In August new figures showed the volume of retail sales in Canberra had shrunk for the first time in almost two years.

The data showed that a 1.6 per cent increase in sales volumes in Canberra in the March quarter was short-lived and may well have been driven by seasonal factors including post-Christmas sales.

But Laurence Hughes, co-owner of the Church Public Service boutique, said spending patterns had changed. "The business had seen 'some dips' in revenue from records and skate goods but clothing sales had grown.



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ECONOMY ACT the fastest economy in 2022-23

Public service tipped to defy deteriorating jobs outlook

Adrian Rollins

Economics correspondent

WORKERS in retail and professional services are expected to cop the brunt of a sharp slowdown in Canberra's jobs market as high interest rates dampen demand in the economy.

After a big influx of international students and increase in the public service payroll helped the ACT add an estimated 4200 jobs this year, a 5.6 per cent jump, forecaster Deloitte Access Economics predicts the territory's employment growth will decelerate next year to just 1.3 per cent and soften even further to just 0.5 per cent in 2025.

But the effects of the slowdown will be felt more keenly by some parts of the economy than others, according to Deloitte.

Report author David Rumbens estimates that next year there will be a 6.1 per cent fall in employment in retail and a 1.1 per cent decline in professional services jobs.

But he expects these losses to be more than offset by a 3 per cent increase in public administration employment which will see the creation of around 1400 jobs, most of them in the Australian Public Service.

The jobs outlook comes against the backdrop of a period of strong expansion in the ACT, which boasted the fastest economy in the nation last financial year.

Canberra grew by 4.3 per cent in 2022-23, far above the national average of 3 per

cent and shading the two strongest states, South Australia (3.8 per cent) and NSW (3.7 per cent).

The ACT's gross state product per person increased 2.4 per cent, bigger than any other state or territory and well in excess of the national average of 1 per cent.

The territory's growth was fueled by a 4.3 per cent increase in public administration work as the federal government moved to implement its policy agenda, the Australian Bureau of Statistics said.

There was also a surge in data centre jobs and a strong rebound in travel and hospitality activity following the disruptions caused by the Delta wave of infections experienced a year earlier.

But the ABS figures show that growth across the country slowed in 2022-23 as rising interest rates weighed on demand, a trend that is expected to intensify next year.

The Reserve Bank of Australia forecasts that gross domestic product will slow to 1.6 per cent by the end of the year before a mild pick up in activity during 2024 and Treasurer Jim Chalmers is expected to a similar forecast when he releases the mid-year economic and fiscal outlook in coming weeks.

Mr Rumbens said the slowdown would set the scene for a softening in the labour market.

After adding 405,500 jobs through 2023, the Deloitte partners expects just 75,000 extra positions will be created in 2024 before



Retail jobs are among the most at risk from the economic slowdown, according to Deloitte Access Economics. Picture by Dion Georgopoulos

an improvement to 177,000 additional jobs in 2025.

Despite the economic slowdown, job losses so far had been minimal, which Mr Rumbens said could be because of labour hoarding.

But he cautioned that the labour market was reaching a tipping point.

"Australia has seen real output growth slow a lot more than employment growth, suggesting employers may be hanging on to staff even when they are not fully utilised," he said. "This is often a sensible strategy when employers expect conditions to pick up

again, particularly when it has been difficult to attract skilled workers.

But he warned that if the economic downturn is prolonged, bosses may be tempted to dump workers, potentially delivering a "double hit" to employment.

"A hot labour market through 2023 looks like making way for a cool summer entering 2024," Mr Rumbens said. "The first signs of trouble have been through job vacancies, which have fallen significantly. Most labour market indicators suggest a tipping point."

He forecasts the jobless rate will reach 4.5 per cent by mid-2024.

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Snows' game-changing \$100m donation

CANBERRA'S Snow family is donating \$100 million over 10 years to establish a world-leading immunology research centre in Melbourne to find answers to autoimmune diseases such as lupus and rheumatoid arthritis.

Described as "one of the largest and longest running philanthropic partnerships in Australian history", the donation will be used to establish the Snow Centre for Immune Health.

The centre will be run by the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research and the Royal Melbourne Hospital.

The hope is that the centre will "solve some of the greatest puzzles in the human body".

The Snow Medical Research Foundation is the creation of Canberra's Snow family and the vision of its patriarch, businessman and philanthropist Terry Snow.

Debilitating autoimmune disorders such as lupus and rheumatoid arthritis collectively affect up to 10 per cent of the population.

In a world-first, The Snow

Centre for Immune Health will look at the immune system as a whole, rather than disease-by-disease.

This will enable researchers to tackle the conditions

head on. "Australia has some of the best researchers in the world. We want to get them out of short-term funding cycles and give them freedom to experiment and take risks

- we're here to back them," Mr Snow said.

"WEHI researchers have always been known for their outstanding commitment to excellence.



Snow Medical Research Foundation founder Ginette Snow (centre) with the medical specialists who will help run the new research centre. Picture by WEHI



Terry, Ginette and Tom Snow at yesterday's announcement. Picture by WEHI

"They presented us with a bold and ambitious vision for Australian research - they're going to change the lives of millions of Australians living with immune health issues."

WEHI acting director Professor Alan Cowman said the Snow Centre for Immune Health would be proactive rather than reactive.

"While research into immune health has traditionally focused on specific diseases or cells, the Snow Centre for Immune Health will invert this and look at the immune system from a 'whole-of-system' perspective - like we do for the cardiovascular and respiratory systems," he said.

Snow Medical chair Tom Snow said the family "could not be more proud" to make the contribution.

"Our family has our fair share of issues - including severe asthma and allergies by multiple members," he explained.

"But our motivation for doing this is because we can turbo-charge 20 years of existing work by amazing scientists, and have the ability to deliver real results that affect the lives of so many."



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A.C.T. POLITICS 'Gen Z need a seat at the table'**Former Greens staffer, 24, to contest Brindabella countback****Jasper Lindell**

THE Greens' Laura Nuttall will contest the countback for Brindabella, with party insiders confident she will take up the seat in the Legislative Assembly.

Ms Nuttall, 24, would be the second youngest woman to be elected to the Assembly (after Democrats MLA Roslyn Dundas who was 23) and the youngest Greens member elected to any Australian parliament.

Ms Nuttall served as a policy advisor for two years in the office of Johnathan Davis, 31, who resigned more than a week ago after the Greens launched an investigation into allegedly improper and potentially illegal sexual relationships with young people.

Mr Davis' resignation triggered a countback process, meaning the ballots that delivered Mr Davis his Brindabella seat at the 2020 Assembly election will be recounted and preferences distributed to the other candidates who ran in that election.

Candidates who unsuccessfully ran for Brindabella must indicate they wish to contest the vacancy by noon on Monday, November 27.

Ms Nuttall was born in Canberra and grew up in Tuggeranong and recently graduated from a double degree at the Australian National University in Asia Pacific studies and politics, philosophy and economics.

Ms Nuttall, who joined the Greens in 2018,

has most recently worked for Libraries ACT.

"I'm nominating for the seat of Brindabella because I want to help the Greens fight for justice for the people and the environment," Ms Nuttall said in a statement published by the Greens.

"If elected, I'd be the first Gen Z representative in the ACT Legislative Assembly and if I can be the one to get my foot in the door, I intend to hold it open for more young people.

"We're going to bear the consequences of the decisions taken in here for the longest. We need a seat at the table."

Electoral Commissioner Damian Cantwell last week said the names of the candidates contesting the vacancy would be declared half an hour after the nominations close, and a computer counting program would then determine the elected candidate.

The official declaration is expected to take place on Tuesday, November 28 at 3.30pm.

Ms Nuttall is the favourite to win the countback process. Ms Nuttall received 1657 first preference votes, equivalent to 3 per cent.

If Ms Nuttall is elected, the composition of the Legislative Assembly would remain the same.

Greens leader Shane Rattenbury said he and his colleagues would be thrilled if Ms Nuttall was elected to the Assembly through the countback process.

"Laura is clearly driven by the intersecting problems around the environment, inequali-



Laura Nuttall, who is likely to win her former boss's vacated seat. Picture supplied

ty and the intergenerational impact of those. Laura would bring an important perspective to the Greens party room as we work together to improve life for Canberrans," Mr Rattenbury said.

Ms Nuttall said she would be proud to represent Tuggeranong and help the Greens' work ensuring the ACT was one of Australia's most environmentally and socially progressive places.

Ms Nuttall cited the environment as a significant priority, echoing comments she made before the 2020 election.

"Too often the old parties put the interests of corporations and their donors before the

people they are supposed to represent. That's why we're one of the richest cities in the world and could house and support everyone, yet we have so many people living on the streets and struggling to meet their basic needs," she said in a candidate statement released before the last election.

"We've seen what's possible during a crisis, and we need to use this moment to build a better normal. That means making sure that everyone has a place to call home, food on their table, and feels welcome in our community. I'm committed to supporting the one thing all politicians and political parties should focus on: people."

7 NEWS

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Productivity growth needs to improve, Reserve Bank of Australia governor Michele Bullock has warned. Picture by Elesia Kurtz

Reserve Bank hints at further interest rate hike

■ From Page 1

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the percentage of patients who reported delaying seeing a GP or not attending at all because of cost doubled from 3.5 per cent to 7 per cent last financial year.

There was also a near-doubling of those putting off a hospital visit, from 1.8 per cent to 3.2 per cent, and the proportion who delayed filling a prescription climbed from 5.6 per cent to 7.6 per cent. Almost one in five reported not seeking mental health care because they could not afford it.

The findings underline spending data showing that most age groups have wound back their spending, with the deepest cuts among 25 to 29 year olds.

Delivering a stark assess-

ment of the inflation problem, Ms Bullock said that while headline inflation was easing, poor productivity gains raised the risk that the current rate of wage growth could add to price pressures - remarks seen as raising the prospect of further interest rate increases.

The governor's remarks came as Reserve Bank board minutes show that central bank staff had factored in "one to two increases" in the official cash rate, as well as a lift in productivity, in their forecasts for inflation to drop below 3 per cent by the end of 2025. That includes the November increase.

The revelation underlines the risk of a further rate hike to follow the Melbourne Cup Day increase, possibly as soon as December.

Markets and many economists consider a

rate increase next month unlikely, and instead think December inflation figures due out at the end of January could be pivotal.

The RBA has not tightened monetary policy as aggressively as many of its peers as it has tried to steer a path to bring inflation down while minimising the hit to the labour market.

But it is worried that the longer inflation remains elevated, the likelier it is that companies and consumer will factor higher prices into their expectations, making it hard to bring inflation down.

The board minutes warned of "growing signs of a mindset among businesses that any cost increases could be passed on to consumers".

Ms Bullock said inflation was "the crucial challenge over the next one to two years".

There have been mounting concerns over the uneven impact of high interest rates on different groups, with evidence that young adults are being hit particularly hard.

But the RBA governor defended the effectiveness of interest rates as a tool to ease price pressures, arguing that while supply disruptions had been responsible for much of the inflation surge, "there is an underlying demand component to it as well".

She said softening demand was "actually something the central bank can do something about".

"Monetary policy actually works. It is in a restrictive phase and it is dampening spending."

Ms Bullock said higher interest rates not only hit the cash flow of borrowers but

encouraged greater saving and supported a stronger dollar, which helped lower the cost of imports.

The governor added that it worked best when "fiscal policy...work[s] in the same direction".

The opposition has accused the government of exacerbating the nation's inflation problem through its spending, and leader Peter Dutton claimed Labor's energy policy "continues to drive up inflation".

But in a statement, Treasurer Jim Chalmers said the claim was at odds with the views of economists and showed Mr Dutton was "out of his depth on the economy". Dr Chalmers said government action had limited electricity price rises to 4.2 per cent instead of 18.6 per cent last quarter.

■ Opinion: Page 31

Screen deal strengthens nation's ties with India

Liz Hobday

AUSTRALIA has signed a film production agreement with India, designed to bring Bollywood to Brisbane and Melbourne to Mumbai.

The treaty-level deal means projects in both countries will be able to get government grants, loans, and tax breaks to make screen content. The Australia-India audiovisual co-production agreement was announced in March and has now been ratified by both nations.

"We're proud to have a large and growing Indian community here in Australia and this agreement will only see our links strengthen further and bringing our people even closer together," said foreign minister Penny Wong. But Screen Producers Australia (SPA) said the deal is another ad hoc agreement struck without enough industry consultation.

"Without a coherent export strategy for the Australian screen industry, we are failing to capitalise and maximise the opportunities afforded by co-production agreements, such as this one with India," SPA said in a submission to the government.

Since Australia's international co-production program began almost 40 years ago, 14 countries have signed on, leading to 214 official co-production releases. Competing nations have cut many more deals: Canada has 56, while the UK and France each have more than 50, according to SPA. The industry will not view the deal as a success if it only results in Indian productions using Australia as a filming location.

WORKPLACE Australians work an average of 280 hours unpaid overtime a year

Workers being ripped off by 'time theft'

Adrian Rollins

Economics correspondent

WORKERS are losing out on more than \$11,000 a year in unpaid overtime because of the extra hours they put into their jobs, according to the Australia Institute.

Employees surveyed for the study reported that they worked an average 5.4 hours of unpaid work a week, including an extra 6.2 hours for full-time workers and four

hours for casuals and those in part-time positions.

And dissatisfaction with work hours was high, with almost half saying they wanted to work more or fewer hours.

The institute estimates that employers are benefitting from \$11,055 in unpaid overtime from the average worker, with the period worked equivalent to an extra seven 38-hour weeks a year of free labour.

The study's author, Centre

for Future Work researcher Fiona Macdonald, said the findings, based on responses from 1640 people, including 1000 in paid work, showed that despite high demand for workers, the labour market was still failing to deliver the kind of work hours that many wanted and the result belied the idea that workers had the upper hand.

Dr Macdonald said there was significant mis-match between work conditions

and the needs of workers.

"We've got many workers, especially casuals in insecure jobs, wanting more hours," she said. "At the same time, employers are more likely to demand long hours, including large amounts of unpaid overtime, from full-time workers."

The findings come amid evidence that worker demand for work from home arrangements remains high.

An analysis of employ-

ment ads by job search company SEEK has found that proportion of vacancies that include work from home provisions leapt from 1.6 per cent just prior to the pandemic to peak of 11 per cent in April and 10 per cent in October.

SEEK senior economist Matt Cowgill said work from home was "still a feature of our labour market".

He said the WFH job ad rate in most industries

remained "at or near a record high".

Dr Macdonald said employees were agreeing to greater hours because of cost of living pressures, "giving their bosses a free kick because many of those hours end up being unpaid".

She said greater protections for workers, like those in the federal government's Closing the Loopholes legislation, were "an important priority".

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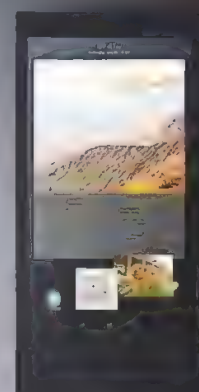


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Judge considered locking up reprisal attacker for tardiness

Tim Piccione

A JUDGE considered whether or not to lock up a woman involved in a pet-related reprisal attack after the offender's "unacceptable" tardiness getting to court.

"It gave me pause," Justice Belinda Baker said on Tuesday after Kock-Kedhia Maker Makoi arrived nearly an hour late to her ACT Supreme Court sentencing.

In May, following a judge-alone trial, the judge found Makoi guilty of joint commission aggravated burglary, assault occasioning actual bodily harm and property damage. She was found not guilty of threatening to kill.

The 29-year-old offender was found to have been involved in a multi-person burglary committed as "a reprisal for the victim's perceived role in causing the death of [Makoi's] dog".

On Tuesday, Justice Baker handed Makoi a jail sentence of just over three years and eight months, to be served by way of intensive correction order.

However, the judge told the offender she had considered whether Makoi should

be afforded the opportunity to serve her term of imprisonment in the community after the woman's late appearance. Had Makoi, who was initially meant to be sentenced on Monday, arrived any later to court on Tuesday, a warrant for her arrest could have been issued.

"You are at a point in your life where you have to make your decision about the future course of your life," the judge said.

"You need to understand the offences you committed are serious and they usually attract a significant period of full-time imprisonment."

The offending incident took place in June 2020 after Makoi's dog was found dead and the offender blamed the

victim, whom she had previously been friends with.

The trial heard the following day, Makoi and three other women went to the home of the victim, who awoke to someone pinning her down and "beating her up".

The victim said Makoi struck her multiple times with a wine rack while her apartment was ransacked.

Justice Baker said "gratuitous damage" to the apartment included broken furniture, broken glass and crockery, and a damaged television.

While police officers said they had smelled petrol in the apartment, a puddle of liquid on the floor had not been tested.

The offender was sen-

tenced on the basis she was in "agreement" to the assault and property damage.

"Even accepting that there is doubt as to whether the offender herself physically assaulted the victim or damaged her property, I have no doubt that the offender was at the very least present and actively encouraging those who did," the judge said.

Justice Baker said the Sudanese woman had not demonstrated any remorse for her offending and still denied her involvement in the incident.

The judge also said Makoi's moral culpability was reduced due to her "challenging" upbringing in a refugee camp.

A forensic psychologist assessed Makoi as meeting the criteria for moderate personality disorder after the "significant trauma" she faced in her formative years.

"There is little wonder that [the offender] demonstrates poor interpersonal relationships, identity formation, attachment systems, reality testing and emotional regulation," the psychologist said.

Makoi's sentence factored in her 24 days in custody.



Kock-Kedhia Maker Makoi arrives late to court on Tuesday. Picture by Tim Piccione

Two homes invaded during 'ice bender'

Tim Piccione

A MAN committed consecutive armed home invasions during an "ice bender" that kept him awake for several days, a court has found.

The ACT Supreme Court heard one of the ordeals had left a young brother and sister with emotional and psychological scars marked by "fear, anxiety and nightmares".

Ivan Stephen Djerke, 47, faced the ACT Supreme Court on Tuesday, when Chief Justice Lucy McCallum sentenced the man to a three-year-and-eight-month jail sentence for two counts of aggravated robbery.

However, the judge ordered the offender, who has a lengthy history of methampheta-

mine and heroin abuse, to serve the sentence by way of intensive correction order.

"There is no doubt his use of drugs was the reason for his offending on this occasion," Chief Justice McCallum said in her sentencing remarks.

The offender burgled the homes of people he knew in search of drugs and money.

Upon finding out he would be heading to a residential rehabilitation facility rather than back into the court cells, Djerke said: "Thank you, your honour."

"If you're lucky, you get 70 summers on earth. I've pissed away 47 of them," the offender previously told a pre-sentence report author.

The man's offending took place in April

2022, when he and a co-offender entered a Kambah home in the early hours of the morning wearing masks, gloves and hoods, with a 12-inch long knife.

A woman in the home was punched in the face twice during the home invasion and the court found Djerke had held the knife to her neck. There is no evidence to support which of the offenders committed the physical assaults.

The two men took off with the woman's phone, laptop, toolboxes, car and \$300 she was made to send them via a bank transfer.

The following night, the two men broke into a Holt home, again while wearing masks and this time brandishing a machete and crowbar, by forcing a hole in the house's

laundry door. After a physical altercation with an 18-year-old man in the house, and threats made to an 18-year-old woman and a dog, the two offenders left with a CCTV hard drive and a speaker.

In an impact statement, the young male victim described the night-time break-in as an "utterly terrifying experience".

Chief Justice McCallum said the offending must have involved some degree of planning as Djerke targeted homes of people that he knew.

"Thinking they may have some drugs or money, and attending those homes armed and masked," she said.

Djerke has already spent more than 18 months in custody related to his offending.

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Vinnies Braddon opening revealed

Bageshri Savvasachi

FOR weeks, passers-by have stopped in front of the Vinnies window in Braddon and waved at the automatic doors hoping they would open.

The wait is finally over with the charity announcing the "highly anticipated" shop is set to open its doors this week.

Vinnies will unveil its first inner-city location on Lonsdale Street this Friday, just in time for the holidays.

"We are thrilled to be opening in time for Christ-

mas to give people a sustainable way to purchase gifts and decorations," Lindsay Rae, director of commercial operations at Vinnies Canberra/Goulburn, said.

He said the 600 square metre space had followed the theme of a circular economy. He added the store's reclaimed roof sheeting and "bespoke" fittings and fixtures would match the "hip culture" of the local neighbourhood.

"We are so proud of what we have created on Lonsdale Street in Braddon," Rae said. He said Vinnies Braddon

would be the 28th shop in the region to offer a place for "connection, volunteering and giving back".

Volunteers at the store have been busy setting up colourful displays for the past few weeks. The op-shop appears to already house a variety of products from clothes, shoes and furniture to accessories.

Vinnies Braddon will open on Friday, November 24, at 9am. The op-shop will then be open seven days a week with late-night trading offered on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

SECURITY REVIEW Government to overhaul laws Public servants to face new offence for disclosures

Miriam Webber

A PROPOSED new secrecy offence for federal public servants who disclose confidential information will consolidate complex secrecy laws, the Albanese government says, while a critic says it "goes too far".

The new offence is one of 11 recommendations made in a review of Commonwealth secrecy provisions - released on Tuesday - which Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus has announced the government will adopt.

The review was commissioned to address concerns about the number, inconsistency and appropriateness of secrecy offences, which have grown from 506 in 2009 to 875.

The general secrecy offence, to apply to public servants, contracted service providers, ministers and their staff, and statutory office holders, would consolidate 168 specific offences and non-disclosure duties across government agencies.

It would establish criminal liability for Commonwealth officers who disclose information obtained in connection with their job or service, where disclosure would be prejudicial to the effective working of government or where the information was communicated to them in confidence.

The review recommended that disclosure of information should be captured by the new offence where it "harms the effective working of government [and] undermines

the Australian community's trust in government and the ability of Commonwealth departments and agencies to deliver policies and programs".

"Embarrassment to the government should not be sufficient to establish prejudice," the review states.

The Attorney-General's consent would be required to prosecute the new offence, which was recommended following allegations that PricewaterhouseCoopers Australia breached confidential Commonwealth information.

This raised potential gaps in existing legislation, with the review recommending the definition of Commonwealth officers be broadened to include "all individuals providing services to the Commonwealth, whether paid or not". It also identified that the new general secrecy offence should address circumstances "where there is no existing legislative duty not to disclose certain information but where disclosure could cause harm".

The government will also bolster press freedom, including by extending the public interest journalism defence to apply to a broader range of offences and legislating the protection of public interest journalism in decisions on search warrants for the investigation of secrecy offences.

A ministerial direction, requiring the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions to seek the Attorney-General's consent before prosecuting a journalist for certain



Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus has announced reforms to Australia's secrecy laws.
Picture by Siththixay Dithavong

secrecy offences will be maintained. While the review did not recommend this direction - introduced in 2019 by former attorney-general Christian Porter - be legislated, Mr Dreyfus has committed to doing so.

"The Albanese government believes a strong and independent media is vital to democracy and holding governments to account," he said in a statement. "Journalists should never face the prospect of being charged or even jailed just for doing their jobs."

Senior lawyer at the Human Rights Law Centre Kieran Pender welcomed some of

the proposed reforms, but criticised the new general secrecy offence.

"The new proposed general secrecy offence goes too far in criminalising the disclosure of public information and is contrary to the Australian Law Reform Commission's prior recommendation," Mr Pender said in a statement.

He also called for reforms to secrecy offences that apply to all Australians, not just public servants: "The government should not waste this opportunity to robustly protect transparency and press freedom, which are cornerstones of our democracy."

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Union boss wife's kill plot secretly recorded

UNION boss John Setka's estranged wife told a private investigator "I have to kill my children's father to survive, you're going to help me work out how I do it", a court has been told.

Emma Walters, 47, who shares two children with Mr Setka, faced Melbourne Magistrates Court on Tuesday over allegations she threatened to kill the Victorian secretary of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, and tried to get a gun to carry out the murder plot.

Walters has pleaded not guilty to one charge of threatening to kill Mr Setka and another of attempting to commit an indictable offence.

She was secretly recorded by private investigator Adrian Peeters after he visited her in March 2023 following a request from Walters about "debugging" her West Footscray home. But Mr Peeters said the conversation "shifted quite quickly" away from debugging, to her alleged plot to kill Mr Setka.

"Ms Walters initiated the shift, she stated that she needed a 'piece' and she



Emma Walters told police she didn't want to kill John Setka but had to protect herself. Picture AAP

had to kill the father of her children," he told the court on Tuesday.

The video Mr Peeters recorded, taken on March 21, was shown to the court as Walters fights the criminal

charges. "I know how to use a gun alright, and I'm willing to deal with the consequences of having to go through the court process of self-defence," Walters can be heard telling Mr Peeters.

"I have to kill my children's father to survive, and that is not a very good position to be in. Anyway, you're going to help me work out how I do it." She is then heard telling Mr Peeters she was a "lawyer

by trade" and that "this conversation never happened ... once it's in the court you cannot say that you have any knowledge of it".

Mr Peeters alleged Walters told him "I need to lure

him here", referring to Mr Setka, before he started the recording.

He said he recorded the conversation for his own safety, and after leaving Walters' property he contacted Mr Setka through the union to warn him. He then reported the incident to police.

Walters was arrested on March 29, and her police interview - where she is shown the video recording - was also played to the court.

She told detectives she was frustrated, distressed and used "florid language" because she "had a responsibility" to protect herself and her children from Mr Setka.

"The police have failed to protect me and the children," she said, in the interview. "Do I want to kill John Setka? No, not at all. Do I have to protect myself? Yes. Do intend to use a firearm to do so? No. That's a woman that's been in distress and the system has failed her and her children, time and time again, I was trying to express that."

Walters, who remains on bail, will return to court on December 8.

Man charged over 'horrendous' sexual assault of woman, 90

A MAN has been charged over a "horrendous" sexual assault on an elderly resident in an aged-care facility.

The 90-year-old woman was treated for serious injuries in hospital after the early morning attack that police say has left her traumatised.

Police were told a man broke into the nursing home on the NSW Central Coast about 12.40am last Wednesday before attacking the woman.

He allegedly used bedding to silence the woman's calls for help and pinned her to



A 90-year-old woman has been left injured and traumatised after being attacked by a man at an aged-care home.

the bed, causing injuries to her arms, legs and head.

Police allege he also stole

some of the woman's property before leaving.

Brett Anthony Crawford,

34, was arrested at a home in Caves Beach, near Lake Macquarie, on Monday night and charged with a string of serious crimes, including committing a serious indictable offence using violence and aggravated sexual assault.

Crawford allegedly ran out the back door of the property and jumped a fence before he was caught, police said. He was taken to hospital to treat minor injuries to his arm before a brief appearance at Belmont Local Court on Tuesday.

Crawford did not apply for

bail and will remain behind bars until his next appearance at Gosford Local Court in February.

Sex Crimes Squad commander Jayne Doherty said the community would understandably be "in uproar" over the attack on a vulnerable, elderly woman.

"It is horrendous that someone, any person in the safety of their home would be attacked like this, but to attack a very defenceless old lady is beyond belief," she said.

Detective Superintendent

Doherty said the assault appeared to have been an opportunistic attack. "So far we haven't been able to find any connection between this male, the aged-care facility and the woman prior to the offence," she said.

Extra security had been hired at the aged-care home to ensure residents felt safe, but police said they had no ongoing safety concerns.

1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732); National Sexual Abuse and Redress Support 1800 211 028.

Latham tweet sparked 'torrent of abuse'

INDEPENDENT politician Alexander Greenwich claims he was exposed to a "torrent" of homophobic abuse after a sexually explicit tweet by ex-NSW One Nation leader Mark Latham.

The defamation case, which was launched by Mr Greenwich over Mr Latham's statements, will proceed to trial next year after settlement talks broke down, the Federal Court heard on Tuesday.

The independent MP is suing over the graphic tweet, which came in response

to Mr Greenwich calling Mr Latham a "disgusting human being".

Mr Greenwich made the comment on Twitter after LGBTQI protesters were attacked outside a Sydney church hall where Mr Latham made a speech ahead of the NSW election in March. The lawsuit targets both Mr Latham's tweet and statements made during an interview with the *Daily Telegraph*, saying the comments exposed him to "hatred, contempt and ridicule".

Mr Latham has denied that he defamed the independent MP and is vigorously defending the lawsuit.

On Tuesday, Justice Anna Katzmann noted the contents of the now "notorious" social media post.

Mr Greenwich's barrister Matthew Collins KC said his client was seeking aggravated damages after the tweet "unleashed a torrent of really despicable homophobic and other abuse".

"Mr Latham, our ultimate case is, responded in a wholly disproportionate and

irrelevant and disgraceful manner," he said.

Instead of doing the honourable thing by apologising for and withdrawing the tweet, Mr Latham then "doubled down" on his comments during the *Daily Telegraph* interview, Dr Collins said. Mr Latham argues Mr Greenwich's reputation remained the same regardless of what was said.

The matter will go to a five-day hearing next year, when both Mr Latham and Mr Greenwich will give evidence to the court.

Cocaine worth \$61m concealed in ship's hull

A SHIPMENT of cocaine worth \$61 million has been found hidden inside the hull of a cargo ship, in an emerging smuggling trend. The ship arrived at the Port of Melbourne from South America on October 7, with a suspicious attachment identified on its hull below the waterline.

Specialist divers retrieved four packages of cocaine with a combined weight of 154kg from inside the vessel's sea chest. Australian Federal Police officers seized

the drugs and a suspected tracking device, launching an investigation to identify the cocaine's source and its intended destination. It is the second attempted import of its kind in two months after 200kg of cocaine was seized from another vessel in August.

AFP Assistant Commissioner Hilda Sirec said the smuggling tactic was a rising trend. "My message to organised crime is that your modus operandi is busted," she said on Tuesday.




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PUBLIC SERVICE Broadcast studio, on-site childcare, and a 'command centre' are on the wish list

Departments on the hunt for new space

Justine Landis-Hanley

THE Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, along with the Australian Electoral Commission, are quickly trying to find a new home in Canberra's central business district after their planned London Circuit location fell through.

The *Canberra Times* revealed in August that developers had pulled the plug on the London Quarter Project - an 11-storey building set to house the two agencies, along with the Department of Education, on the corner of London Circuit and Northbourne Avenue.

According to documents published to the federal government's public tenders site in November, the electoral commission and DEWR are hoping to fast-track procurement for new office accommodation, with their existing leases across Canberra set to run out between 2025 and 2027.

The agencies are willing to share up to three buildings with a combined floor plan of 52,000 to 60,000 square metres.

Alternatively, the electoral

commission is looking for its own office building between 13,000 to 15,000 square metres in size, while DEWR is after one or two buildings close together that total 39,000 to 45,000 square metres.

The documents call for an initial lease of at least 15 years, plus two five-year options to extend.

The agencies have a number of unique requirements for the spaces. For DEWR, that includes at least 200 square metres of space to convert into a broadcast studio.

On-site childcare services

could also be on the cards for DEWR employees, with the department inviting respondents to explore in their proposals what it would look like to include childcare facilities on the premises.

The agency makes it clear, though, that the Commonwealth would not own or operate such a service.

Meanwhile, the electoral commission wants 170 square metres of space to fit out a "command centre", and another 16 square metres for a media room.

High-quality end of trip facilities like showers, lock-

ers and bike storage are also on the list of wants, with the agencies stipulating the need for cis-gendered, accessible and gender-neutral facilities.

Walker Corporation - the developer behind the original London Quarter project - scrapped the office development after the National Capital Authority requested the project be revised by "height, size and scale".

The employment department had hoped that the new development, and its \$150 million fit-out, would draw more people to the office and boost the agency's

poor 50 per cent occupancy rate.

But Walker told government agencies that "ongoing delays" in obtaining a works approval for the site from the planning authority had led to its decision to back out of the project.

The electoral commission and DEWR aren't the only agencies set to relocate in the coming years.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade shared in June that it was looking to establish a new office near Parliament House before mid-2026.

Canberra is the most expensive place to visit the dentist, new data shows

Lanie Tindale

IT COSTS more to see a dentist in the ACT than any other state or territory in the country, according to new data collected by health advocacy group Cleanbill.

A standard ACT dental check-up and clean costs, on average, \$275. This is

\$46 more than the national average.

Visiting the dentist for the first time will set the average Canberra back \$364, while the average Australian only pays \$297.

People in the electorate of Canberra, which includes suburbs in the city, Woden and Belconnen, pay more to

see a dentist for a check-up and clean than anyone else in the country.

The average price is \$285 for a standard appointment.

For a slightly cheaper option, Canberrans could try to find a service in the electorate of Fenner, which costs \$29 less.

Head a bit further to

Hume, which encompasses Goulburn, and you could save \$56 or \$39 if you go to Eden-Monaro, which includes Queanbeyan.

People in more affluent electorates generally pay more to see the dentist and doctor, Cleanbill founder James Gillespie said.

"The electorates in the

ACT ... are quite expensive compared to other electorates around the country," he said.

"There are very similar trends with the billing practices of dentists as compared to the billing practices of GPs across the country.

"I think that's really reflective of the economic

circumstances that you find in individual areas that these practices are having to contend with in order to continue to run."

Canberrans can expect to pay more than other Australians to visit the doctor, with ACT offering the fewest bulk-billing services in the country.

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CANBERRA LIFE AS WE KNOW IT

Music, magic and a museum market

1. Metaverse of Magic

Bringing together magicians from around the globe, this game-changing theatrical epic combines breathtaking illusions, stunning stagecraft and cutting-edge technology. By using your personal smart device, you'll have the opportunity to actively take part in the performance. Joining forces with the incredible magician Lennox (Ash Hodgkinson aka Ash Magic) and the all-knowing Game Master DIGI, you'll embark on a thrilling quest to reveal the secrets of the four masters of illusion and strive to gain access to the prestigious Inner Realm. Level up, earn points and rewards, and ultimately unlock the secrets of all magic - past, present, and future! It's on at the Canberra Theatre until December 3, 2023, various dates and times. See: canberratheatrecentre.com.au.



Metaverse of Magic is an interactive show. Picture by Jeff Busby

2. Museum Market Day

Shop in the relaxed atmosphere of Museum Market Day. Find unique gifts in the Museum Shop or browse fashion, jewellery and homewares from over 40 local and regional stallholders. Soak up the ambience with a DJ, and food and drink stands. The event is on at the National Museum of Australia on Sunday, November 26, 2023 from 9am to 4pm. See: nma.gov.au under What's On.

3. At The Street

It's a busy weekend at The Street Theatre. Josh Pyke is coming to showcase his album *Revisions* on Sunday, November 26 at 7pm. In *Mariedl, Selfies with a Giantess* (Friday November 24 to Sunday November 26, 2023, various times), Austrian actor Maxi Blaha invites audiences into the life of Tyrolean Maria Fassnauer (Mariedl), who at well over two metres in height was believed to be the world's tallest woman in her lifetime. Comedian Neel Kolhatkar returns with his new show *Villain Era* on Friday, November 24, 2023 at 8pm. And singer-songwriter Fred Smith is launching his new album *Look*, a collection of songs not about Afghanistan. It's on at The Street Theatre on Saturday, November 25, 2023 at 7.30pm. For bookings

and more information on all shows see: thestreet.org.au.

4. Spilt Milk

The music, food and art festival is returning to Canberra. This year, the lineup boasts Post Malone, Dom Dolla, Aitch, Dermot Kennedy, Tkay Maidza, Peach PRC and Latto, to name a few. It's on at Exhibition Park in Canberra on Saturday, November

25, 2023 from 11am to 11pm. See: spilt-milk.com.au.

5. Triceratop

Meet our hero. He's the last dinosaur ever to live. Like the very last. He wakes up alone (what's new?) one morning in the bunker to discover that it's just him. Everyone else is gone. And he's never fallen in love! In a re-imagining of pre-history, we discover



Neel Kolhatkar. Picture supplied



Fred Smith. Picture by Geoffrey Dunn

there was once a thriving and advanced dinosaur society, but one that had little respect for the natural world, that valued constant unsustainable technological progress and was too arrogant to act on the impending climate disaster that would eventually wipe them out of existence. The B Bar, Friday, November 24 and Saturday, November 25 at 8pm. Recommended for ages 16+. See: theq.net.au.

See a classic werewolf movie or improv theatre, hear jazz and ABBA

Fright Night at the NFSA

The National Film and Sound Archive continues its Fright Night: Cult Cinema Classics series with a screening of *An American Werewolf in London* (M, 97 minutes, 1981), hosted by Venus Mantrap. Two American college students (David Naughton and Griffin Dunne), backpacking through Britain, ignore local lore and stray onto the moors, where they are attacked by a ravenous werewolf. It's on at Arc Cinema on Friday, November 24, 2023 at 8pm. See: nfsa.gov.au.

Bjorn Again

ABBA fans rejoice as ABBA's timeless hits are brought to the stage in a sing-along, dance-along extravaganza. From

Waterloo, Gimme! Gimme! Gimme! and Fernando to Take a Chance, Mamma Mia, Dancing Queen, and more. It's on at Canberra Southern Cross Club Woden on Saturday, November 25 at 8pm as a dinner-show package or show only. See: premier.ticketek.com.au.

Lisa Keen Trio

Relax by Lake Tuggeranong at Tuggeranong Arts Centre to the sounds of the Leisa Keen Trio in the next instalment of Tuggeranong Art Centre's monthly jazz series. The Leisa Keen Trio is one of Canberra's busiest jazz combos, performing a smooth blend of well-known jazz tunes, and pop tunes with their own "jazz treat-

ment" of "Postmodern Jukebox" styled arrangements. They will perform on Friday, November 24, 2023 at 5.30pm (drinks available from 5pm). Entry by donation. See: tuggeranongarts.com.

Pride in the Capital

Rebus Playback Theatre in partnership with SpringOut presents this improvisational theatre show in which audience members tell stories from their own lives and watch as actors and musicians enact them on the spot using movement, music and words, but without script or rehearsal. Gorman Arts Centre, Saturday November 25, 2023 at 6.30pm. See: eventbrite.com.



A scene from *An American Werewolf in London*. Picture supplied

WORLD

WAR WEARY Hamas says truce agreement with Israel close despite ongoing violence

Hope rises amid rubble and death

Gaza

THE chief of Hamas says the Palestinian militant group is near a truce agreement with Israel as the deadly assault on Gaza continues and rockets are fired in return.

Hamas officials are "close to reaching a truce agreement" with Israel and the group has delivered its response to Qatari mediators, Ismail Haniyeh said in a statement released on Tuesday.

The statement gave no more details but a Hamas official told Al Jazeera TV negotiations were centred on how long the truce would last, arrangements for delivery of aid into Gaza and the exchange of Israeli hostages held by Hamas for Palestinian prisoners in Israel.

The Red Cross is working to "advance humanitarian issues" in Gaza. Both sides would free women and children and details would be announced by Qatar, which is mediating the negotiations, an official said.

Hamas took about 240 hostages during its October 7 rampage into Israel that killed 1200 people.

Mirjana Spoljaric, president of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), met Haniyeh in Qatar on Monday to "advance humanitarian issues" related to the conflict, the Geneva-based ICRC said in a statement. She also met separately with Qatari authorities.

The ICRC said it was not part of negotiations aimed at releasing the hostages but as a neutral intermediary it was ready "to facilitate any future release that the parties agree to".

Talk of an imminent hostage deal has swirled for days. Israeli Ambassador to the US Michael Herzog said

We're closer now than we've been.

White House spokesman John Kirby

on Sunday he hoped for an agreement "in the coming days" while Qatar's Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdulrahman al-Thani said the remaining sticking points were "very minor".

US President Joe Biden said on Tuesday that he believed an accord was near. "We're closer now than we've been before," White House spokesman John Kirby said of a hostage agreement.

"We really need to adhere to the mantra that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed," White House deputy national security adviser Jon Finer told NBC's *Meet the Press* program. "Sensitive negotiations like this can fall

apart at the last minute."

Hamas' raid on October 7, the deadliest day in Israel's 75-year-old history, prompted Israel to invade the Palestinian territory to target Hamas. Since then, Gaza's Hamas-run government said at least 13,300 Palestinians have been killed, including at least 5600 children and 3550 women, by unrelenting Israeli bombardment.

Hamas said on its Telegram account on Monday it had launched a barrage of missiles towards Tel Aviv. Witnesses also reported rockets being fired at central Israel.

The Palestinian news agency WAFA said on

Tuesday at least 17 Palestinians were killed in the Israeli bombing of the Nuseirat camp in central Gaza at midnight. There was no immediate comment from Israel.

Gaza's health ministry said on Monday at least 12 Palestinians were killed and dozens wounded by fighting at the Indonesian Hospital complex, which was encircled by Israeli tanks.

Health officials said 700 patients along with staff were under Israeli fire. Hospital staff denied there were any armed militants on the premises.

The Indonesian Hospital has largely ceased operations but is still sheltering patients, staff and displaced residents.

World Health Organisation chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said he was "appalled" by the attack that

he too said had killed 12 people, including patients.

The Israeli Defence Forces said troops had fired back at fighters in the hospital while taking "numerous measures to minimise harm" to non-combatants.

Meanwhile, 28 prematurely born babies evacuated from Gaza's biggest hospital, Al-Shifa, have been taken into Egypt for urgent treatment.

Israeli forces seized Al-Shifa last week to search for what they said was a tunnel network belonging to Hamas Islamists built underneath. Hundreds of patients, medical staff and displaced people left the hospital at the weekend, with doctors saying they were ejected by troops.

The United Nations says two-thirds of Gaza's 2.3 million people have been made homeless.

Court sets 2100 years jail time for mob links

Lamezia Terme

AN ITALIAN tribunal has convicted 207 people and sentenced them to a combined 2100 years in prison on charges related to their membership in Italy's 'Ndrangheta organised crime syndicate, one of the world's most powerful, extensive and wealthy drug-trafficking groups.

It took more than an hour and 40 minutes to read aloud the court's lengthy verdict, including the acquittal of 131 other defendants. The drama unfolded in a bunker-style courtroom, specially built for the proceedings, in the southern Calabria region, where the mob organisation was originally based.

The 'Ndrangheta has quietly amassed power in Italy and abroad as the Sicilian Mafia lost influence and now holds almost a monopoly on cocaine importation in Europe, according to prosecutors who led the investigation. The organisation also has bases in North and South America and is active in Africa.

The defendants had been charged with crimes that included drug and arms trafficking, extortion and Mafia association, a term in Italy's penal code for members of organised crime groups. Others were charged with acting in complicity with the 'Ndrangheta without actually being a member.

The charges grew out of an investigation of 12 clans linked to a convicted 'Ndrangheta boss. The central figure, Luigi Mancuso, served 19 years in an Italian prison for his role in leading one of the 'Ndrangheta's most powerful crime families.



Talk of an imminent hostage deal has been swirling for days. Picture AP

Climate on track to warm by nearly three degrees: UN report

London

CURRENT emissions pledges to limit climate change will still put the world on track to warm by nearly 3 degrees this century, according to a United Nations analysis.

The annual *Emissions Gap* report, which assesses countries' promises to tackle climate change compared with what is needed, says the world faces between 2.5 and 2.9 degrees of warming above pre-industrial levels if governments do not boost climate action.

At 3 degrees of warming,

scientists predict the world could pass several catastrophic points of no return, from the runaway melting of ice sheets to the Amazon rainforest drying out.

"Present trends are racing our planet down a dead-end 3 degree temperature rise," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said. "The emissions gap is more like an emissions canyon."

World leaders will soon meet in Dubai for the annual UN climate summit COP28 with the aim of keeping the Paris Agreement warming

target of 1.5 degrees alive.

But the new UN report does little to inspire hope that this goal remains in reach, concluding that planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions must fall by 42 per cent by 2030 to hold warming at 1.5 degrees.

Even in the most optimistic emissions scenario, the chance of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees is just 14 per cent - adding to a growing body of scientific evidence suggesting the goal is dead. Global greenhouse gas emissions rose by 1.2 per cent

from 2021 to 2022, reaching a record 57.4 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.

The report assessed countries' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), which they are required to update every five years, to determine how much the world might warm if these plans are fully implemented. It compares unconditional pledges - promises with no strings attached, which would lead to a 2.9 degree temperature rise - to conditional pledges that would hold warming to 2.5 degrees.



UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres says "the emissions gap is more like an emissions canyon". Picture EPA

Ex-UK PM 'bamboozled' by COVID science

London

FORMER British prime minister Boris Johnson struggled to come to grips with much of the science during the coronavirus pandemic, his chief scientific adviser has told an inquiry into how the UK handled the crisis.

In keenly awaited testimony to the public inquiry, Patrick Vallance said he and others faced repeated problems getting Johnson to understand charts and that he changed his mind on numerous occasions.

"I think I'm right in saying that the prime minister gave up science at 15," he said. "I think he'd be the first to admit it wasn't his forte and that he struggled with the concepts and we did need to repeat them - often."

Extracts from Vallance's mostly contemporaneous diary of the time were relayed to the inquiry. In them, he wrote that Johnson was often "bamboozled" by the graphs and data and that watching him "get his head around stats is awful".

During the pandemic, Vallance was a highly visible presence in the UK. He and

chief medical officer Chris Whitty regularly flanked Johnson at the daily COVID-19 press briefings given from the prime minister's offices on Downing Street.

Vallance, who stepped

down from his role as the UK government's chief scientific adviser earlier this year, said Johnson's struggles were not unique and that many leaders had problems in understanding the scientific

evidence and advice, especially in the first stages of the pandemic in early 2020.

He recalled a meeting of European scientific advisers where one country leader was said to have problems

with exponential curves and "the telephone call burst into laughter because it was true in every country".

Johnson was hospitalised with the virus in April 2020 less than two weeks after he

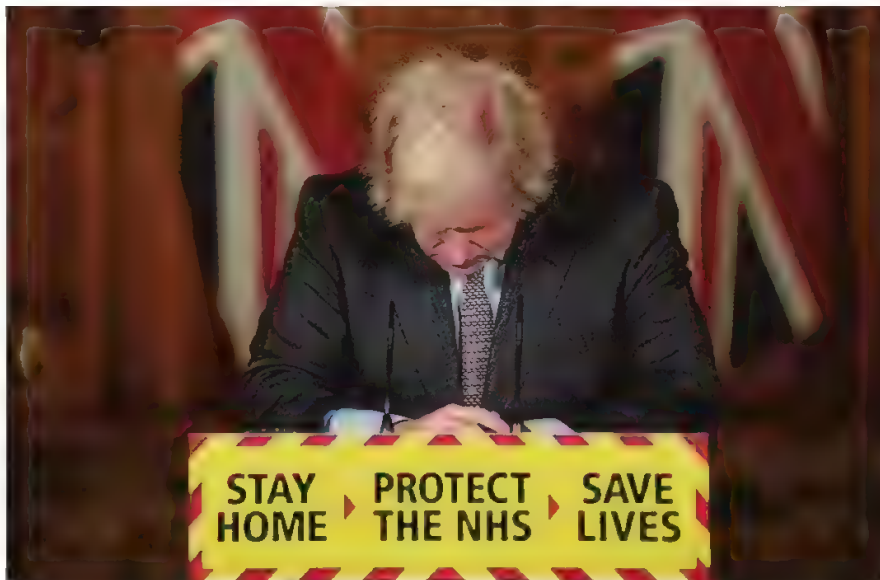
put the country into lockdown for the first time.

Vallance conceded the prime minister was "unable to concentrate" on things when he was really unwell but that after his recuperation "there was no obvious change between him and what he was like beforehand".

The UK has one of the highest COVID-19 death tolls in Europe, with the virus recorded as a cause of death for more than 232,000 people.

Johnson, who was forced to step down as prime minister in September 2022 following revelations of lockdown rule-breaking parties at his Downing Street residence during the pandemic, is due to address the inquiry before Christmas.

The probe, led by retired Judge Heather Hallett, is expected to take three years to complete although interim assessments are set to be published. Johnson agreed in late 2021 to hold a public inquiry after heavy pressure from bereaved families. The inquiry is currently focusing on political decision-making around COVID measures.



Scientists faced a real struggle in trying to get Boris Johnson to understand key terms and statistics relating to coronavirus, Britain's COVID-19 pandemic inquiry has been told. Picture AP

Biden turns 81 as age worries weigh on his bid for re-election

Washington

US PRESIDENT Joe Biden has turned 81, a milestone that draws attention to his status as the oldest individual ever to occupy the Oval Office, with opinion polls showing Americans are worried he is too old for the post to which he is seeking re-election.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters that Biden and his family would celebrate his birthday later this week with coconut cake when they gathered for the Thanksgiving



The White House says President Joe Biden should be judged on his record, not his age. Picture EPA

holiday on the island of Nantucket.

Biden has addressed those

who worry he is too old for the rigours of the White House with humour and an

attempt to convince voters his age and experience over a half-century in public life is an asset in tackling America's problems.

At a ceremony on Monday to pardon the National Thanksgiving Turkey, Biden joked he was not around for the first such turkey event 76 years ago. "I want you to know I wasn't there at the first one. I was too young to make it up," he said.

If re-elected, Biden would be 86 by the end of his second term in office. Republican Ronald Reagan, who had

the prior record as oldest US president, ended his second four-year term at the age 77 in 1989.

Donald Trump, the front-runner for the Republican nomination to challenge Biden in the 2024 election, is 77 - he released a letter from his doctor on Monday stating he was in "excellent" physical and mental health.

In a mid-September Reuters/Ipsos poll, voters expressed concern over Biden's age and fitness for office. Seventy-seven per cent of respondents, includ-

ing 65 per cent of Democrats, said Biden was too old to be president, while just 39 per cent said Biden was mentally sharp enough for the presidency. By comparison, 56 per cent of poll respondents said Trump was too old for the office, while 54 per cent said he was mentally sharp enough to handle the challenges of the presidency.

Jean-Pierre, asked about the poll results, said Biden has managed to mark some major legislative achievements and should be judged on his record, not his age.

OpenAI appoints new boss amid chaos

San Francisco

OPENAI has named ex-Twitch boss Emmett Shear as interim CEO, while outgoing chief Sam Altman moved to backer Microsoft, in a surprise turn of events that capped a tumultuous weekend for the start-up at the heart of an artificial intelligence boom.

The appointments followed Altman's abrupt ousting just days earlier as CEO of the ChatGPT maker and ended speculation that he could return.

Microsoft rushed in to

attract some of the biggest names that left OpenAI, including another co-founder Greg Brockman, to keep key talent out of the hands of rivals while seeking to stabilise OpenAI, in which it has invested billions.

The start-up's newly appointed interim head moved quickly to dismiss speculation that OpenAI's board ousted Altman due to a spat over the safety of powerful AI models.

Shear vowed to open an investigation into the firing, consider new governance

for OpenAI and continue its path of making available technology such as its viral chatbot.

"I'm not crazy enough to take this job without board support for commercialising our awesome models," Shear said. "OpenAI's stability and success are too important to allow turmoil to disrupt them like this."

The start-up dismissed Altman on Friday after a "breakdown of communications", according to an internal memo.

Governing OpenAI is a

non-profit. Its four-person board as of Friday consists of three independent directors holding no equity in OpenAI and chief scientist Ilya Sutskever.

"I deeply regret my participation in the board's actions. I never intended to harm OpenAI. I love everything we've built together and I will do everything I can to reunite the company," Sutskever said. Staff have demanded the appointment of two new independent directors to the board.

Shakira avoids \$24m Spanish tax fraud trial

Barcelona

COLOMBIAN pop star Shakira has reached a settlement with prosecutors to avoid a trial in Barcelona over charges she failed to pay \$24 million in Spanish income tax between 2012 and 2014. As part of the deal, she accepted the charges and a fine of 50 per cent of the amount owed, more than 7.3 million euros (\$12.2 million).

She also accepted another fine of 438,000 euros (\$734,000) to avoid a three-

year prison sentence, the judge said. "This decision to reach a deal responds to personal, emotional and sentimental reasons that have nothing to do with legal (reasons)," Shakira said in a statement. "Winning is not a victory if the price is that they rob you of so many years of your life."

Previously, the *Hips Don't Lie* singer, who has a second tax fraud investigation pending with Spanish authorities, had vowed to fight what she called false accusations.

food & wine

Where love is the main ingredient

Karen Hardy

THE everyday meals, cooked in the homes of Japanese mothers and grandmothers, is the food that Emiko Davies grew up with. They're the dishes she makes for her own children: simple, satisfying food like tamagogohan (stir fried egg and rice), soba noodle soup, Japanese curry, yakisoba, and miso soup, prepared with whatever seasonal vegetables happen to be around.

They are the dishes in her latest book, *Gohan: Everyday Japanese Cooking*.

While she's been living in Italy since 2005, the cookbook author, food journalist and food blogger, is proud of her Canberra connections. Her parents Ian and Sumie were diplomats and the family travelled extensively during her childhood, living in China and visiting family in Japan, but Canberra was the family base.

Unlike what many people think, Japanese home cooking is not fiddly, nor time consuming, she says. It's quick and remarkably simple, thanks to the Japanese philosophy that fresh, seasonal food doesn't need much to enhance its natural flavour.

"Gohan literally means 'rice' in Japanese - and when I think of this word, I think quite specifically about a small ceramic bowl of fragrant, glistening, steamed, lightly sticky rice," she writes.

"Tellingly, it is also the general word for a 'family meal'. A bowl of rice is what most home-cooked Japanese meals revolve around.

"If you haven't eaten rice, you haven't eaten. I can still hear Obaachan, my Japanese grandmother, announcing that dinner is ready with, 'Gohan desuyo!'"

Davies has dedicated *Gohan* to her grandmother.

"My obaachan made the best food, full stop. It was something I looked forward to every single visit. It wasn't shojin ryori, the restrained, almost-vegan temple cuisine of Zen Buddhists; hers was proper home cooking and, in line with the flexitarian philosophy of their Buddhist sect, it consist-

ed mostly of vegetables and plenty of tofu, but also fish and eggs, with the occasional beef sukiyaki (undeniably her signature dish) for special occasions such as when we would visit."

When Davies spoke to her mother Sumie, who still lives in Canberra, what she thought about the idea of calling a book on Japanese home cooking *Gohan*, she touched on what's been captured in this beautiful book.

"Gohan means the everyday home-cooked meal. Nothing fussy, but quick and easy, and nourishing. One that is made with love," her mother said.

"I think the best food is created when you cook for someone you love."

Davies said her mother paused and reminded her of a drawing her eldest daughter Mariu did when she was five, before she could write properly. It was a recipe for



Gohan: Everyday Japanese Cooking, by Emiko Davies. Smith Street Books, distributed by Thames & Hudson. \$49.99.

soup, where all the ingredients were drawn instead of written down. One of the ingredients was a heart.

"Remember Mariu's soup recipe that had love as an ingredient? To me that is 'Gohan'."

Emiko Davies will be in conversation with food writer Joanna Savill on Sunday, December 10, in the Edith Room at Dear Prudence, with snacks provided with each ticket. Families are welcome, children under 12 enter for free. Tickets are \$20, or \$50 with a signed book. Places are limited and Davies will be available to sign books. Bookings via eventbrite.com

She will also be appearing at the Asia Bookroom on December 11, from 6-7.30pm. Unit 2, 1-3 Lawry Place, Macquarie. Phone 62515191 for more information and registration.

There is also the chance to see Davies at a "Conversation and Class" event at Moonacres cooking school and cafe in Robertson, in the Southern Highlands on December 9, from 3-7pm. She will talk about the book and teach dishes from *Gohan* and afterwards there'll be a long lunch with wine. \$245pp. Bookings via moonacres.rezdy.com

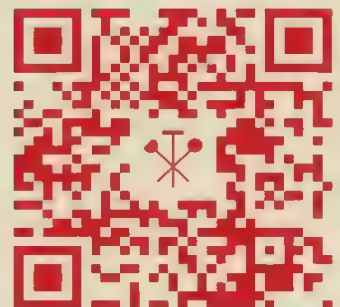
Head inside Food and Wine for recipes from Emiko Davies' *Gohan*.



Emiko Davies' shares recipes from her family kitchen. Picture by Yuki Sugiura

We are now open for
BREAKFAST & LUNCH

Wednesday - Sunday 8 am



Authentic food is the 'wheel' thing



KAREN HARDY

It seems a rather incongruous idea that you might find some of Canberra's most authentic Vietnamese food in the back of Braddon's Waves Car Wash. But that could well be the case with the opening of BanMe.

The little restaurant is a venture between Tommy Nguyen and Kathy Phan. Nguyen's been in the food industry for more than 15 years, working for such names as Luke Mangano and Peter Gilmore, as well as Pialligo Estate locally, but when he met Kathy almost three years ago, he not only fell in love with her, but also with her talents in the kitchen.

"I love food and I've worked in the industry for quite a while but when I met Kathy and tasted her fabulous food and authentic Vietnamese flavours, I knew she was the one.

"The first dish of hers I tasted was a slow-cooked fish, in a sweet and sour soup."

He was hooked.

Phan cooking is well known in Canberra's Vietnamese community. She's catered for functions and parties and BanMe has been flat out since it opened a few weeks ago.

Nguyen was born and raised in Ban Me town in the highlands of Vietnam, where three generations of his family have been cooks.

A lot of the dishes at BanMe have their origins in their family recipes. Phan gives credit to an aunt for her cooking skills.

Nguyen's mother Thi Thuy Hang has come over to help in BanMe. His brothers are also in the kitchen.

There's nothing fancy about BanMe. There's a screen on the wall to tell you if your car is ready, you enter via a long corridor with views of the rotating brushes in the car wash.

But if you're after authentic flavours then it's well worth checking out. There are some signature dishes including a breakfast dish called Banme chao, with fried eggs, bacon, soft pork meatballs and housemade chicken liver pate.



Kathy Phan, Thi Thuy Hang and Tommy Nguyen at BanMe in Braddon. Picture by Gary Ramage



Temporada's Dave Young.

The same pate is used in the banh mi rolls. With super soft Saigon rolls from the Vietnamese bakery in Wanniasa, filled with pickles, coriander and your choice of protein, from a marinated pork that falls apart in your mouth, to tender chicken and a tofu option.

The bun cha is also worth ordering, served with noodles and vegetables and pork meatballs that are so tender and full of flavour.

There's also a range of traditional drinks, from ice teas, to Vietnamese iced coffees, you'll be transported to distant lands.

Phan says she couldn't find a good Vietnamese restaurant when she came to Canberra, and that made her cook more.

She admits she's very busy, working on recipes, working in the restaurant, as well as running one of Canberra's best regarded nail salons, Tip Toe in Dickson.

Early reviews have called the food nostalgic and comforting, and for Nguyen and Phan, that's what it's all about. They just want to share the flavours of their homeland.

When the car wash closes, they pull some low tables they brought back from Vietnam out into the space, people gather and chat and eat food that's been cooked from the heart. Put all your preconceived ideas aside and head to BanMe. Book your car in for a wash if you have to, but the food is worth it all on its own.

■ BanMe, 15 Lonsdale St, Braddon. Open seven days, 8am til 9pm.
 ■ banme.com.au

TEMPORADA CHRISTMAS

Dave Young, owner and executive chef at Temporada, knows if you've been naughty or nice.

So join him at this exclusive Christmas dinner, a collaboration with Mada Wines.

There's a four course dinner with twists on all the favourites. Think starters of Wagyu tartare, duck liver parfait cannoli and smoked salmon mousse. A bonus seafood platter followed by roast duck with charcoal-grilled cherries, shaved cabbage salad and rosemary roast potatoes. The classic wattleseed pavlova with marscapone cream and summer fruits to finish.

Like a proper Christmas dinner but you don't have to cook, or clean up.

There'll be wine matches from the Hamish Young's award-winning Mada range too.

■ \$150pp, December 6, 6.30pm. Bookings via temporada.com.au

Time for lunch before the silly season

Karen Hardy

IT'S almost that time of the year where it's impossible to find a free night for a catch-up with friends before the silly season really starts. So why not do lunch? Quite a few people seem to be doing set menus at lunch, check out Mrs Wang's express \$35 express lunch. At Dada in Woden, there's a \$55 lunch, with a vegan option.

We love the idea of Lazy Su's long lunch offer. For \$65pp (min two, max eight) you'll get five plates off the popular snack menu plus free-flowing wines, beer and a couple of cocktails, too. Between noon and 4pm, Thursday to Saturday. And yes, the wagyu cheesesteak spring rolls are on the menu.

■ Book at lazy-su.com.au.

VOTE EARLY

Both Bar Rochford and Rizla have been shortlisted in the Young Guns of Wine top wine bars for 2023 and you can help them get to the finals by voting NOW.

The Wineslinger Award is decided by the people's choice and if you vote, you're in with the chance to win a year's supply of wine from Young Gun of Wine.

Bar Rochford has been nominated since the awards started in 2018, placing in either the top venues, or top 50, every year.

Rizla made its first appearance in 2022.

We love both places and are placing our vote at younggunofwine.com

OUR KIND OF TREE

Get the gang together and head into Amici

Wine Bar and Deli on Northbourne Ave, maybe for one of the fun Twilight Sessions on a Thursday, with live music from 6.30pm. And make sure you add one of the new Aperol Spritz trees to your booking. Twelve branches, 12 cocktails, 12 days of Christmas.
 ■ amici.bar

LE BON MELANGE

Apologies to our Gungahlin readers who might have been confused after reading last week's story about Natalie Van den Bosch's new venture at Pialligo. The talented baker owned Le Bon Melange for five years before selling it 18 months ago.

Le Bon Melange is still trading under new management so head in for some sweet treats.



From Emiko Davies' home kitchen

Unlike what many people think, Japanese home cooking is not fiddly, nor time consuming. It's quick and remarkably simple, thanks to the Japanese philosophy that fresh, seasonal food doesn't need much to enhance its natural flavour.

WELCOME HOME SUKIYAKI

This dish has a special place in my heart. It was everyone's favourite signature dish of my obaachan, and one of the rare occasions she would cook meat. It felt like such a special treat and still is for me when my mother makes it. I've lived continents away from home since going to university; after being away for a year, sukiyaki was the dish that my mother would make to welcome me home.

Ingredients

300g marbled beef (such as sirloin), very thinly sliced
1 block of medium-firm tofu, cut into 1.5cm slices
2-4 spring onions or 1 leek, cut on the diagonal into 5cm pie
1 pack of enoki mushrooms
4 king oyster mushrooms, sliced lengthways
1 small head of napa cabbage, chopped into 2.5cm segments
1 large bunch of shungiku chrysanthemum greens, or similar, cut into 5cm sections
200g shirataki noodles
4 bowls of freshly cooked Japanese short-grain rice
4 very fresh eggs, for dipping (optional)

Sukiyaki sauce:

125ml mirin
125ml sake
125ml soy sauce
2 tbsp sugar, or to taste
125ml (1/2 cup) water

Method

1. To make the sukiyaki sauce, place the mirin and sake in a saucepan and bring to the boil, which will evaporate the alcohol. After two minutes, turn down to a gentle simmer and add the soy sauce, sugar and water and continue simmering, stirring occasionally, until the sugar is dissolved. Set aside. (You can make this in advance and keep in a jar in the fridge for up to a week.)
2. To prepare the table for sukiyaki, set up the burner in the centre of the table with the pot of sauce on top (sukiyaki is normally cooked in a cast-iron pot). Arrange the beef on a platter and arrange the tofu, vegetables and shirataki noodles attractively on a separate platter. Serve each guest a bowl of rice, a bowl with a freshly cracked egg, if using, and some chopsticks.
3. Turn on the burner and bring the sauce to a simmer over a low-medium heat. Add the meat and some of the vegetables (enough to fit - you'll do a few rounds). Pick out

Gohan: Everyday Japanese Cooking, by Emiko Davies, Smith Street Books, distributed by Thames & Hudson Australia. \$49.99

the ingredients as they are ready - most things take mere minutes to cook: the tofu and greens are very quick; the cabbage, leek or spring onions can go longer, for example.

4. To avoid contamination of chopsticks in the sukiyaki, rather than allow every guest to use their own chopsticks, use a pair of saibashi, cooking chopsticks, which are longer than regular chopsticks, that stays by the pot and anyone who wants to take something out can use those alone. Otherwise, appoint a "cook" who is in charge of distributing the foods as they are ready to come out.

Variation: Simply leave out the beef and add a little extra of the other ingredients (my favourites are the tofu and the leek, but mushrooms are excellent in this dish, as they soak up the sauce so well); vegans only need to leave out the dipping egg, too..

Serves 4



MISO EGGPLANT

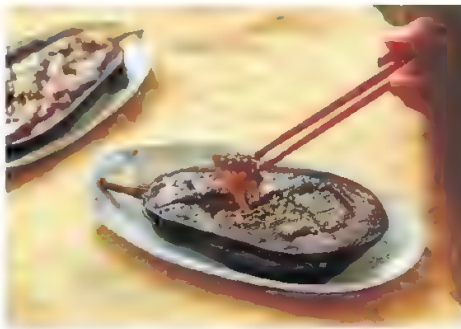
"Nasu dengaku" is one of the first Japanese recipes I learned how to make when I moved to the US for university and was very far from home, and it is often still the dish I will make for someone unfamiliar with Japanese home cooking, because it is an instant winner - it has been my husband's favourite dish ever since I first made it for him. The silky eggplant together with the intensely flavourful, sweet miso sauce is just unforgettable.

Ingredients

1 large eggplant
vegetable oil, for frying
2 tbsp brown miso
1 tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp mirin
2 tsp sugar (I like raw demerara/turbinado sugar here)

To garnish:

sesame seeds or finely chopped spring onion (green parts only)



Method

1. Cut the eggplant in half lengthways, then score the flesh in a criss-cross pattern about 2cm wide to make it easier to eat with chopsticks. I also like to trim a small (5mm) section of the skin on the bottom so that the eggplant doesn't wobble and sits flat.

2. Heat a 1-2cm depth of vegetable oil in a frying pan and fry the eggplant halves until they become deep brown and tender, about three minutes on each side. Frying is the secret to the silky texture. Remove carefully from the oil and let drain on a wire rack.
3. Heat the grill element of your oven (or heat the oven to 220C if you don't have this function).
4. Mix the miso, soy sauce, mirin and sugar together to a smooth paste and warm in a small saucepan to dissolve the sugar. If it is too thick, add a splash of water to loosen a little and mix until smooth, then remove from the heat.
5. Place the eggplants with the criss-cross sides up on a baking tray and cover with a thick coating of the miso mixture, about one to two tablespoons. Place under the grill until the miso paste is bubbling around the edges, about two to three minutes (if using the oven to roast, place the tray on the top shelf and bake for several minutes or until the miso paste begins to bubble and brown slightly).
6. Serve sprinkled with toasted sesame seeds or finely chopped spring onions.

Serves 4 as a side dish.

STRAWBERRY MOCHI

Strawberry daifuku (meaning literally "great luck") are made of a small round mochi filled with anko and a whole fresh strawberry. They have been popular since the 1980s and are a very special treat when strawberries are in season - I loved these as a child.

Ingredients

90g shiratamako rice flour
125ml water
1 tbsp sugar
1 tbsp potato starch, or as needed
150g smooth (koshian) Anko (see below for recipe)
6 whole, not too large strawberries, hulled

Method

1. Combine the rice flour with the water and sugar in a small, heatproof bowl. Cook it in a steamer, simply letting the steam gently cook the dough, checking two to three times and mixing with a wet spatula as needed for 12-15 minutes, or until the dough becomes thick with a completely translucent appearance. You can also microwave it in a similar way, checking for it to become translucent, and mixing two to three times in between.
2. Prepare a chopping board or tray dusted liberally with the potato starch.
3. Divide the anko into six balls, about 25g each, roughly the size of a large cherry. If it is too sticky, wet your hands to help make nice smooth balls. Set them aside.
4. Tip the mochi dough onto the top of the potato starch and use a dough scraper or sharp knife to cut the dough into six even pieces. Dust with more potato starch, then roll one piece out to a thin circle, about



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1-2mm thick, with a well-dusted rolling pin. You can also shape by hand, stretching the dough like a miniature pizza. Place a ball of anko in the middle of the dough and gather up all the edges, pinching to seal. Turn the mochi upside-down so the seam is facing down. Continue in the same way

to make the rest.

5. With a sharp knife, cut a slit in the top of each daifuku and push a strawberry inside. These should be enjoyed immediately with a cup of green tea. Do not refrigerate mochi as they will become unpleasantly hard.

Makes 6.

ANKO (ADZUKI) BEAN PASTE**Ingredients**

250g dried red adzuki beans
1 litre water
220-250g sugar
1/4 tsp salt

Method

1. Rinse and drain the beans. Because they are so small, there is no need to soak them. Place in a pan with the water and bring to a gentle simmer, then cover and cook for one hour, or until the beans are so soft they can be easily squashed. Check occasionally to see if you need to top up with any water to keep the beans just covered.
2. Strain the beans. Place the beans back into the pan, pour over the sugar and salt and heat over a low-medium heat. Adding sugar makes the beans release water, so you should see that as the beans warm up they will soon be floating in liquid. Once they are floating, for tsuban, blend the beans with a stick blender, leaving about a third of the beans whole. For koshian, you can blend completely, then - to make it even smoother - pass through a fine-mesh sieve.
3. Continue to cook over a medium heat, stirring frequently so the mixture does not burn (be careful as it will splutter if given the chance), until you can draw a line in the bottom of the pan and it holds for a second or so. Remove from the heat and let the anko cool completely.
4. Use in your favourite recipe, enjoy by the spoonful or store for later use (it will keep in the freezer for up to three months, or in the fridge for up to four days).

Makes about 750g.

**MY MOTHER'S LEMON-PICKLED DAIKON**

I messaged my mother, Sumie, one day to ask her how she does her pickled daikon, which is, for me, one of the most Japanese flavours ever. I love dipping into a little side of these pickles at breakfast or really with any meal. These are so easy to make because they are a form of "quick pickling" - you can enjoy them after only a couple of hours - and you can always adjust the sweetness, sourness or even spiciness (with the addition of ginger or chilli, for example) to your liking.

Ingredients

1 x 10cm piece of daikon (about 150g)
1/4 tsp salt
125ml rice vinegar
1 1/2 tbsp sugar, or to taste
1/2 lemon, cut into thin slices, then quarters

Method

1. Peel and slice the daikon into 2-3mm slices and then cut the slices into halves or quarters, depending on how large the daikon circumference is. Place them in a bowl and sprinkle over the salt, rubbing it through so that it is well distributed. Leave for five to 10 minutes. This will help draw out extra moisture. Rinse and pat dry really well with a clean dish towel.
2. Combine the rice vinegar and sugar in a jar and shake or stir the mixture until the sugar is dissolved. Add the daikon and lemon pieces to the jar and let marinate for a couple of hours before eating.
3. Keep leftovers in their jar in the fridge; these last really well, if you don't eat them all at once.

Makes 1 x 250ml jar.

REVIEWS by Rick Allen**LIGHT AND GENEROUS**

Montalto Pennon Hill Pinot Noir 2022
PRICE: \$36

Montalto, in the Mornington Peninsula, does a number of pinots and it's amazing that this is their entry level. It won the trophy for best pinot at this year's Sydney Royal Wine Show and also scored very highly at the Pinot Challenge, so it has 'form'. It's very light on its feet, with expressive red fruit - strawberries mostly - and a lick of spice. It has a velvety mouthfeel, but this is all about those red fruits which are so bright and generous. This one's a crowd pleaser all right.

**THE CHAMP**

Meadowbank Pinot Noir, 2022
PRICE: \$60

As you'd expect of the winner, a lovely wine. Meadowbank sits high in the Derwent Valley in Tasmania and there's most certainly a layered complexity at play here. It has an appealing floral nose - berries, musk and rose petal - which lead to some bright cherry flavours, interwoven with strawberries that play a supporting role. There's just a hint of darker fruit too in mid palate, plums mostly. There's an earthy depth to this wine, and that typically silky pinot noir texture.

**POWER APLENTY**

Giant Steps Sexton Vineyard Pinot Noir, 2022
PRICE: \$80

This is darker in colour, ruby red, and is a more brooding style of wine. There are cherries, strawberries and mushrooms in play here. It's quite powerful too, without ever losing that light-on-its-feet pinot quality. All beautifully behaved really. There's good length on the palate - it continues to open up with time in the glass - and some gentle spice and crushed herb notes that bring a savoury edge to the finish. Giant Steps does a range of superb Yarra Valley pinots, and this is right up there.





Fish of the day, barramundi singaporean chilli crab sauce, grilled pineapple. Pictures by Elesia Kurtz



Seafood dumpling, tomato consommé.



Prawn, tom yum sauce, rockmelon.

Give in to the set menu trust exercise

Jasper Lindell

The most civilised meals have set menus. Ordering a la carte is a state bordering on anarchy. And anarchy is best avoided, especially at meal times.

Set menus provide a meal order and clarity, rather than allowing you to bodge something together. Consider it the difference between erecting your own ramshackle shack and having master craftsmen build a palace.

On any given night out with friends, I make no secret of steering the group towards the set menu. That work begins in suggesting restaurants I know to have them.

This work is often met with relief: "I thought no one was going to mention it" and, "Oh, thank God; I didn't know what to order." Set menus remove the fuss and give time back for actually enjoying the meal. If you really like picking everything for yourself, go out for breakfast instead.

Lanterne Rooms, tucked neatly in the bottom of one of those buildings that have transformed Constitution Avenue in Campbell, has two set menus. What a terrific start. We choose to tackle the three-course option (\$90 a head, groups up to 10), which offers a neatly contained list of selections to share across each course.

Even less decision making is required if one selects the degustation menu (\$120 a head), which is a set menu in the truest sense.

Save your decision-making faculties for the well-appointed drinks list.

The three-course menu requires diners to select three entrees from a list of five, and



Aravinth Sriramulu and John Chow.

two mains for groups of two to three from a list of seven options.

On the Tuesday night of our reservation, the beef cheek on the mains list was unavailable (we became aware only after trying to select it) and the usual dessert - pandan-infused purple rice pudding - had been replaced with a zabaglione: Italian-style custard served with fresh berries.

By the time, shortly after, the food started arriving, the unavailable choices were far from our minds. The tom yum prawns had a startling freshness, coupled with a lingering zing. They were perfectly moreish.

Next came the ngo hiang, a fried pork roll, served in little segments about a bite and a half in size. It was a relief there was a finite quantity of these, because it would have been difficult to stop yourself from

16/20

LANTERNE ROOMS

Address: 4/81 Constitution Ave, Campbell

Phone: 6249 6889

Website: chairmangroup.com.au/lanterne-rooms

Hours: Lunch, Thursday and Friday, noon-2pm dinner, Tuesday to Saturday, 5.45-10pm

Chef: Aravinth Sriramulu

Noise: Not a problem

Dietary: Range of options

eating them, wrapped in bean-curd skin, forever. The last entree instalment is a lightly fried tofu. On the inside it is preternaturally smooth and sumptuous; the outside is just the right amount of crispy, and evenly so around each piece.

For the mains - which are served after a well-timed pause - we select the roasted duck breast and the battered eggplant.

The duck segments are small, tender and rich. The taste is how you imagine duck to taste, but so rarely find as good as this. The eggplant, served with a tamarind dressing, has a pleasant kick to accompany a well-rounded textural experience. This was our pick to replace the unavailable beef cheek, but I'm glad that is how the meal played out.

The mains are served with steamed rice and a separate bowl of stir-fried zucchini and broccolini, doused in oyster sauce and pumpkin seeds. These form a solid com-

ponent to the meal, tasty in their own right without being scene-stealers.

Unexpectedly, a member of the wait staff appears with a bowl of the beef rendang. A complimentary addition to the meal, she says, and one of the house specialities.

I provide this disclaimer before my declaration the beef rendang is superb so you can make up your own mind if I have been bribed. I deny all charges. Each chunk of Angus beef has a melt-in-your-mouth quality, each a moment of reflection and joy. We thought we were full when the bowl arrived, but this dish compels its own eating. Don't believe me? You try it and find something critical to say about it.

The plural in Lanterne Rooms' name is genuine. The space is divided into cosy pockets, each room its own intriguing and beguiling place to stop. Imagine venturing through an imperial palace to the human-sized chambers, with walls that could belong to an FCC house. Annoying group of diners somewhere else in the restaurant? You would hardly know you shared the same service.

There is also acoustic foam under the tables. This should be mandated as part of restaurant licensing requirements. Noise really is no problem. There is a hum of approval - hardly a surprise given the food - but none of the intrusiveness of overheard conversation.

Set menus are really just a culinary trust exercise. Do you trust a restaurant with the shape of your meal or do you need to intervene to tell them how it ought to be done?

Trust them at Lanterne Rooms. Trust them completely and wholeheartedly.

HOW WE SCORE Of 20 points, 10 are awarded for food, five for service, three for ambience, two for wow factor.

12 Reasonable 13 Solid and satisfactory 14 Good 15★ Very good 16★★ Seriously good 17★★ Great 18★★★ Excellent 19★★★★ Outstanding 20★★★★ The best of the best



The inaugural MasterChef judging team Gary Mehigan, George Calombaris and Matt Preston. Inset: *Big Mouth: A memoir*, by Matt Preston. Picture supplied

Dishing up a lifetime of memories

Matt Preston's entertaining life story is one of sex, drugs, rock and roll - and tinned tuna pate, writes KAREN HARDY.

There's a meal I cook my children which we've dubbed "Matt and cheese". It's one of those dishes that fill our tummies and our hearts at the same time.

If they've had a bad week and end up at mum's for dinner, I comfort them with carbohydrates.

It's Matt Preston's Mac 'n' cheese with chunky garlic bread topping, from his book *More: More recipes with more veg for more joy* (Plum, \$39.99, 2019).

We're catching up to talk about his memoir, *Big Mouth*, and he loves it that I'm serving it for dinner that night.

"The one thing anyone who writes a cookbook wants is for a recipe to become part of someone else's repertoire, it's the ultimate compliment," he says.

"And when you pass that recipe down it will become your mac and cheese recipe, your name will be attached to it."

In his memoir, he talks about the earliest meals he remembers from his own childhood - good and bad.

Tinned sardines mixed with bread-crumbs, olives, pimentos, diced onion and hard-boiled eggs, mixed into some kind of mousse; cod's roe pate; marinated kippers with onions; ham steak with tinned pineapple; Coco Pops with whipped cream.

"I bet you're astonished none of these iconic recipes made it into any of my eight cookbooks," he writes

Food plays an important role in his memoir, for obvious reasons, but there's a lot to learn about a man who, for the sole

fact we've seen his face on television for the best part of 15 years, we think we know.

His family history is worthy of its own story. It's complicated, he says in the book. His mother Jennifer wasn't married when she fell pregnant and years later she married another man who adopted Preston. Yet he had a wonderful relationship with both his maternal and paternal grandmothers who were completely different types.

His school years were a mix. One of his primary school report cards read "Matthew has a heart as big as his frame, tough and though the majority of boys here are so nice, the view is held that Matthew belongs to a very charming minority."

By highschool, it was "To speak in cliches, he can be good when he wants to be. But when he doesn't, he can be awful. I do hope that he will make up his mind to do justice to himself."

After school he joined the army, attending the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst as a way of funding his studies at the University of Kent. He resigned his commission after his first year.

He soon found his university tribe, people who were into music and were happy to share their eyeliner. He formed a band called the Volcanic Rabbits who gave away sweets to the audience to quell any thoughts of rioting.

He worked on the alternative university newspaper and wrote about music, he played rugby and wore a black negligee to the end-of-season ball.

In 1993 he followed a girlfriend to



As a small child in England and with his first cravat. Pictures supplied

Australia. The relationship was soon over but his career took off, writing for magazines about music and television.

He says he watched every single episode of *Neighbours* and *Home Away* that aired between late 1993 and 1998, coming up with story ideas for magazines back in the United Kingdom.

"I learnt that nothing good ever comes from weddings or picnics out in the country."

He eventually started writing about food, reviewing restaurants, writing about new openings, the occasional longer feature. In 2002 he started writing for *delicious* magazine, and he still is.

In 2009 he was named the World's Best Food Writer in the World Food Awards.

That was also the year *MasterChef* first went to air.

"Our role on *MasterChef* wasn't to be the star, it was to be the rails on which the contestants ran."

Nothing makes him prouder of hearing of alumni who are succeeding in the food industry, even the ones who got knocked out in the first round, particularly those ones.

"It was kind of sad when it finished but you don't go into those kind of things without knowing they'll finish at some point."

"It was sad because we weren't going to get to work with that family anyone, Gary, George, but the crew too, the behind the scenes team that we worked with over the seven years. That was the most painful wrench."

"Looking back at it I realised what an amazing privilege it all was."

■ *Big Mouth: A memoir*, by Matt Preston. Viking. \$34.99.

OPINION

EDITORIAL

Climate change is an existential threat

IT HAS become fashionable for many on the right to use the wars in Ukraine and Gaza to play down the existential threat to humanity posed by climate change.

While it is a truism to say that Israelis and Ukrainians are far more concerned about the immediate threats they face than global warming, that is no excuse to suggest any nation can afford to drop the ball.

By conflating separate issues critics of stronger emissions reductions targets are not only being disingenuous and deceptive, they also demonstrate a lack of intellectual rigour.

The stark reality, spelt out in the United Nations' Emissions Gap report this week, is humanity is on track for a full-scale climate disaster before the end of the century.

The report makes it clear existing targets, negotiated as part of the Paris Agreement, are inadequate and it may already be too late to even slow down the global heating cycle.

"The world is witnessing a disturbing acceleration in the number, speed and scale of broken climate records," the report said.

"At the time of writing 86 days have been recorded with temperatures exceeding 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels this year."

September was the hottest month on record, exceeding the previous record by 0.5 degrees and with the global average tem-

The Canberra Times

TO SERVE THE NATIONAL CITY
AND THROUGH IT THE NATION

Humanity is on track for a climate disaster.

perature at 1.8 degrees above pre-industrial levels.

This alarming spike, which has been linked to catastrophic weather events, comes after global greenhouse gas emissions increased by 1.2 per cent from 2021 to 2022.

The report calls on high-income and high-emissions nations such as Australia to accelerate their emissions reductions efforts and to adopt bolder targets in order to reach net zero as a matter of urgency.

Low- and middle-income countries are being urged to meet pressing development needs in ways that are compatible with a transition away from fossil fuels.

Unless urgent measures are taken the consequences will be dire with a three degree increase over pre-industrial levels by the end of the century.

Of particular concern is that while the number of countries making net-zero pledges continues to increase, confidence in their successful implementation is low.

It's not good enough for countries such as this one to talk the talk. Australia also needs to walk the walk. That means no new fossil fuel projects.

The report states the chance of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees, the original goal of the Paris Agreement, has now fallen

to just 14 per cent.

If global warming peaks at 3 degrees or more above pre-industrial levels as the report predicts our children and our children's children will be living in a very different world to the one previous generations knew.

Possible consequences include a runaway melting of the polar ice caps and the complete loss of the Amazon rainforest, the "lungs of the world".

Australia, a hot and dry continent since the end of the last ice age, would be one of the worst affected nations. Cities, towns and even entire regions may be rendered uninhabitable by soaring temperatures, droughts and flooding.

The irony is humanity has known this was on the cards for many decades.

It is now just over 34 years since the then British PM Margaret Thatcher used her speech to the UN on November 8, 1989, to warn global warming and climate change had overtaken communism as the greatest threat to humanity.

The Berlin wall fell the following day.

While many will quibble about the cost of going even harder on the transition to renewables than Australia is now, the real issue is the cost of doing nothing.

That is a bill the world cannot afford to pay.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The RBA's 'target band' is putting the inflation dragon to flight

THE Reserve Bank's 2 to 3 per cent inflation target is not based on a precise and irrefutable calculation. But it is not quite as arbitrary as Noel Whittaker (Your Money, November 20) writes.

There are good reasons for a target rate that is low but positive. Aiming at 2 to 3 per cent inflation allows relative wages to adjust without requiring falls in nominal wages. It allows the Reserve Bank to run a stimulatory monetary policy in a recession without having to take interest rates negative.

Having a similar target to comparable economies avoids introducing longer term trends into exchange rates.

Two to 3 per cent was a plausible target to adopt as even the countries with the best post-war inflation records had not sustained inflation rates much lower. A target much lower would have been unlikely to attract the support of all major political parties, business and trade unions, which has boosted confidence it would be maintained.

Since the target was adopted in the early 1990s inflation has indeed averaged in the middle of the band as intended. In the current cycle, the Bank's interest rate increases have seen inflation fall from 7.8 per cent to 5.4 per cent. The battle has not yet been won but inflation is clearly retreating.

John Hawkins, Canberra

Too balanced by far

Douglas McKenzie (Letters, November 20) leapt to the ABC's defence in regard to bias.

My observation is that ABC's "balanced" approach is dialled up to ridiculous levels as commented on by their Laura Tingle.

The ABC has a "dare not mention genocide or apartheid" approach despite many pundits suggesting Israel is guilty of both of these.

That suggests bias to me.

But I agree with Douglas that one hour

of comprehensive early evening SBS World News is far superior to 20 minutes of mainly trivia on the ABC news.

Roderick Holesgrove, Crace

Not a good idea

The decision by our planning authorities to allow the demolition of Woden's only hardware outlet to make way for a service station appears illogical.

There are already two service stations within 100 metres around the corner in Adelaide Avenue. A third is close by in Athllon Drive.

No thought has been given to the tradespeople working on the many construction sites in Woden, or the local handy people who now have to travel to Fyshwick or Tuggeranong for their hardware requirements.

The fact the new development will house another McDonald's outlet may have something to do with it.

It will have a drive through and pickup facility, unlike the one across the road in the plaza.

No doubt money is also behind the decision, prioritising the convenience of the Maccas customer over those wishing to purchase hardware.

Tony May, Pearce

Where can we eat out?

Now that ACT outdoor dining permits will be fast-tracked when can we hope to have information about where these outdoor dining areas are going to be?

Outdoor dining is not only a contribution to the local economy, it is a particularly important option for people who need to take COVID-19 precautions.

It should be possible for someone (ACT government? ACT Business Chamber? Restaurant and Catering Industry Association?) to set up a searchable database of venues



The RBA's 2 to 3 per cent inflation target is designed to ensure the value of people's money is not eroded. Picture by Jamila Toderas

with outdoor dining, including their opening hours and amenities, such as rain protection.

Karina Morris, Weetangera

Biogas is transitional

The Mugga Lane biogas capture project is a step in the right direction to reducing emissions, but only as a transition measure ("ACT gas capture expansion could power 10,800 homes" November 20).

Landfill gas capture can do a lot to reduce methane emissions. The provision of battery storage and a 20-megawatt grid upgrade is also good news for our energy security in the ACT.

Unfortunately burning the biogas still creates carbon emissions. Biogas can only be

considered as a transition fuel on the road to reducing pollution.

Better to tackle the problem at the source and reduce the amount of waste we send to landfill.

Anne O'Hara, Wanniasa

Be woke and win

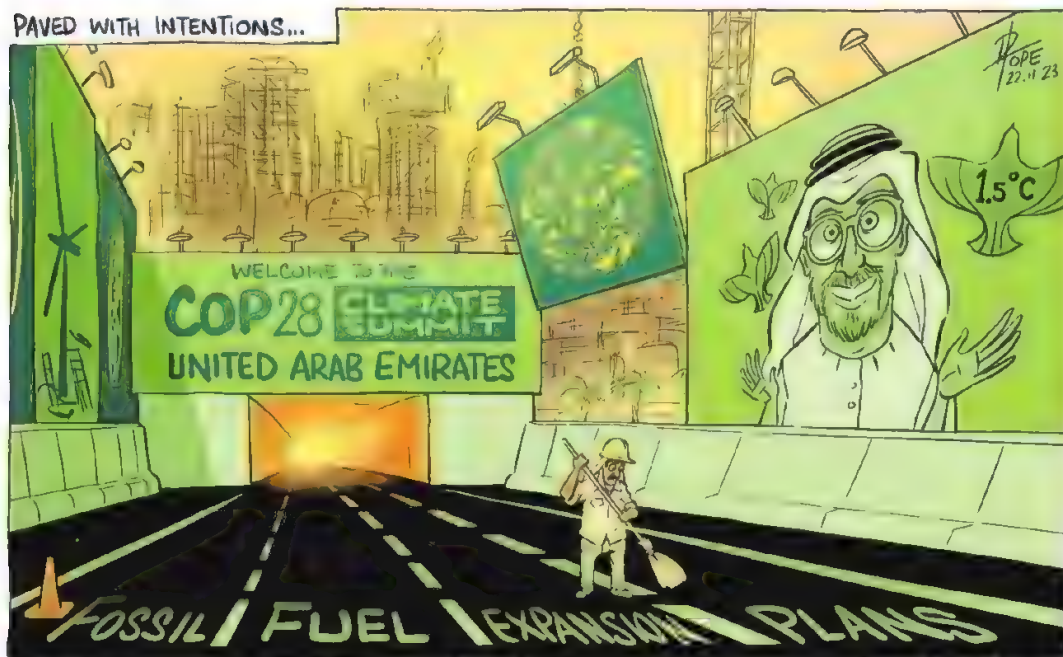
Roger Quarterman (Letters, November 21) is on the ball with his explanation of the origins and true meaning of the term "woke".

While the term is a relatively modern construct, opposition to those who "are aware of and actively attentive to important facts and issues" is not.

So, if you're anti-woke today, then most probably you would have been pro-slavery

POPE'S VIEW

PAVED WITH INTENTIONS...



Our 'handsome boy' might perhaps also direct his attention to dealing with this countries woes before jetting off again overseas.

Alex Wallensky, Broulee, NSW

in the past, against labour reforms regulating working hours and conditions (including the abolition of exploitative child labour), opposed to the extension of voting rights to commoners and absolutely opposed to the suffragettes and voting rights for women.

And had you been around 2000 years ago you'd have been on the side of those who crucified Jesus Christ of Nazareth because his teachings as one of the most woke individuals in history threatened your power and privileges.

Keith Hill, Canberra City

A sensible idea

I was surprised to be told by an Austrian friend that when a telecom carrier has an outage in Austria all customers are seamlessly transferred to another carrier for the duration.

He also said you have to look closely at your device to notice you are operating on another carrier's system. It is a non-event for users who are largely unaware their chosen carrier has failed.

He indicated most European countries do this. I have also heard that Canada has moved to make this mandatory after a Canada-wide carrier failed for 15 hours.

Obviously this should be implemented very quickly here in the national interest.

Gilbert Hughes, Weetangera

Labor a disappointment

It's sad and disappointing. The Labor Party swept the Coalition aside 18 months ago as the people voted for a government full of promises.

Climate action, whistleblower action, transparency, honesty and civility in the

house were all on offer. But what we've got is more mining approvals; whistleblower David McBride forced to plead guilty as his defence is disallowed; failure in the honesty stakes from the outset; a government driven by fear of misinformation (of just about everything) uttered by the Coalition.

It's like watching a bad movie where a government is controlled by corporate power and misinformation.

W Book, Hackett

Who is divisive?

I refer to Judy Bamberger's letter (Letters, November 20).

She praises Albanese's leadership and says political leaders have a responsibility to bring communities together, not divide them. That accusation was levelled against Peter Dutton.

Perhaps Mr Albanese and Ms Bamberger could harken back to the most divisive referendum that Albanese instigated, and then lost in a landslide, as a failure to read the mood of the Australian people.

Our "handsome boy" might perhaps also direct his attention to dealing with this countries woes before jetting off again overseas and leaving others in the party to carry out duties that he as PM should be directing.

Alex Wallensky, Broulee, NSW

HAVE YOUR SAY

Letters to the Editor should be kept to 250 or fewer words. To the Point letters should not exceed 50 words. Reference to *The Canberra Times* reports should include date and page number. Provide a phone number and address (only your suburb will be published). Email letters.editor@canberratimes.com.au with your letter in the message field.

Responsibility for election comment is taken by John-Paul Moloney of 121 Marcus Clarke Street, Canberra. Published by Federal Capital Press of Australia Pty Ltd.

RETURN TO SENDER

I don't think NSW needs Zed either. I can't imagine NSW preselectors coming up with a reason to place him ahead of the other candidates, all from NSW, they can choose from. Hopefully the lease in Queanbeyan is short-term.

Tony Preston-Stanley, Malua Bay, NSW

ANOTHER OPTION

If Zed does not get the NSW gig perhaps he can be encouraged to move much further north to help the Queensland LNP wrest a valuable Senate spot from One Nation.

Sue Dyer, Downer

A RISKY MOVE

It's pretty brave of the US to send a ship to the Mediterranean to support the Israelis. When they sent a ship [the USS Liberty, a spy ship] close to Israel during the 1967 war the Israelis attacked it, set it on fire, and killed 34 US sailors.

Kenneth Griffiths, O'Connor

TRUE COLOURS

Vasily Martin (Letters, November 20) reveals his true feelings when he refers pejoratively to "virtue-signallers" supporting the Palestinians.

Eric Hunter, Cook

STATELESS DEMONISED?

Why is the opposition demonising vulnerable stateless people who have served their sentences by pushing to keep them in indefinite immigration detention? Is this "wedge politics" meant to showing the opposition as tough and the government as weak? Be careful, the wedge might backfire.

Graeme Rankin, Holder

Dutton not PM material

After reading Mark Kenny's article "Deep division delivered by design" (November 19) and Keith Hill's letter (also November 19), I came to the following conclusion.

Unless Peter Dutton completely changes his tactics from fomenting social division and hatred to encouraging social cohesion, harmony, and mutual trust, he is not fit to be prime minister of Australia.

Dr Douglas Mackenzie, Deakin

Too many people

The ongoing housing crisis has spawned many articles arguing it is the result of a supply problem and all we need do is build more houses.

However, Leith van Onselen the chief economist at the Macquarie Bank has pointed out that in the last financial year our population growth was around 630,000 due to high immigration but we only built 170,000 homes.

But even this doesn't give the full picture because the construction rate does not include the impact of house demolitions which were 114,323 in the five-year period up to 2021.

There have also been 134,000 homes damaged by weather events in 2020 including 5303 destroyed in NSW alone and this toll is likely to increase as weather events intensify.

There is a very real prospect that regions of Australia - even some cities - will become uninhabitable due to climate change.

This would create a surge of internal climate refugees seeking homes in localities already short of housing.

Don Owers, Dudley

AND THE BACKYARD?

Did those late-middle-aged men who boast about growing up in small houses play in the street? A backyard of any size is a bit small to kick a football. Even backyard cricket is an exercise in "please, Mr Smith, can we have our ball back?" Traffic is much harder to cope with these days.

Stewart Bath, Isabella Plains

APPALLING RHETORIC

Netanyahu claims Gaza is a "city of evil". Defence Minister Gallant says "we are fighting against animals". Social media picks up the theme, comparing Palestinians to "rats or snakes", all serving to legitimise the dehumanisation and slaughter.

Albert M White, Queanbeyan, NSW

WHY BOTHER?

Is China wasting its time, money and energy in attempting to gain footholds in the South Pacific given many islands, including the Solomons, are in danger of inundation from rising sea levels. It would transform them into militarily strategic "submarine" bases however.

Mario Stivala, Belconnen

HAMAS IS EVIL

Dave Roberts (Letters, November 20) labelling Hamas as freedom fighters displays an abject ignorance of terrorism and adds to the compendium of fake news. Freedom fighters don't execute defenceless people, commit rape, take hostages and set children ablaze.

D Bogusz, Greenway

INDUSTRY AND JUDGEMENT

Apparently some Canberrans couldn't resist a cowardly kick at Zed Seselja (Letters, November 18). Zed believed Edmund Burke: "Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgement, and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion".

Bill Deane, Chapman

OPINION

Getting early years program right is critical

Travers McLeod, Lin Hatfield Dodds, Sharon Callister, Suzie Riddell

AS OUR early years framework stands right now, too many children miss out on the support and early learning they need to thrive.

One in five children start school facing developmental vulnerability, and that figure is even higher for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Over the next year, we have a rare opportunity to redefine Australia's approach to early childhood development at a national level.

With significant and overdue investment in the early years pledged from all levels of government and major strategies, reviews and inquiries all landing in coming months, the current level of attention in the early years is unprecedented.

On the horizon is the National Early Years Strategy, National Vision for Early Childhood Education and Care developed through National Cabinet, Productivity Commission Inquiry into Early Childhood Education and Care, ACCC Childcare Inquiry and the NDIS Review.

This focus presents our best chance to move towards a nationally consistent early childhood system that is the launchpad for better lives and for Australia's future prosperity. To realise this ambition and reboot what is currently a fragmented and confused national system, these important reform efforts need to be aligned.

The National Early Years Strategy is the overarching piece - we should take the time to get it right.

The Commonwealth must take the lead on a national approach to ensure the early years reform agenda is cohesive and moves forward in a connected way, creating a better early childhood development system no matter which state or territory a child grows up in. As members of the Goodstart Syndicate, we know the importance of co-ordinated investment in the early years. There is no single intervention that sets a child up for life. Rather, as the recently released South Australian Royal Commission into Early Childhood



Finally, with attention on early childhood years, we have the chance to make a real change. Picture Shutterstock

Education and Care finds, "stacking multiple evidence-based services improves outcomes for children in the first 1000 days".

This includes support across the spectrum of high-quality early childhood education and care, parenting programs to help parents in their role as first and best educators of their child, child and maternal health services, and broader supports like secure housing and income.

It is the combination of these supports - available for all families who want and need them - from as soon as a child is born, that will make sure no child gets left behind. Reforms to our early years system must recognise the importance of all these building blocks working together to give our youngest the best possible start in life. We must also consider what we need to leave in the past to move towards a better early childhood

system, which should start with a no-regrets decisions to abolish the frequently criticised, highly flawed activity test for childcare subsidies. This punitive measure makes it harder for children from the lowest-income households to access the early childhood education and care they need, and creates a barrier for their parents to participate in the workforce.

Charting a course to universal early childhood education and care was a key pillar of the skills agenda presented in the Working Future White Paper released last month.

It was also echoed in the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce 10-year plan for women's economic equality released recently, with calls to legislate to establish and invest in universal, high quality and affordable early childhood education and care.

We're currently on the cusp of being able

to change the trajectory of these young lives with smart and bold policy decisions on how we approach early years development in Australia. This is too important an opportunity to pass up - a nationally consistent direction through the Early Years Strategy will be imperative.

Now is the time to be co-ordinated and unified in working towards Australia being the best place to be and to raise a child. We owe our kids that much.

Travers McLeod is executive director of the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Lin Hatfield Dodds is the CEO of the Benevolent Society, Sharon Callister is the CEO of Mission Australia and Suzie Riddell is the CEO of Social Ventures Australia. They lead the four community sector organisations responsible for the establishment of Goodstart Early Learning.

We have a lot to prove when it comes to carbon reduction

BLAIR PALESE



THERE has been much talk of whether the Australian Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, needed to be at the recent APEC Economic Leaders Summit in San Francisco. To my mind, and that of anyone interested in Australia's role in the emerging global decarbonising market, there was no question that he should be there.

Things are moving fast in the lead up to the UN climate conference COP28 in Dubai later this month.

The recent announcement by the two biggest member economies of APEC, the US and China, that they are resuming a working group on climate co-operation with a pledge to triple renewable energy investment is big news.

It is yet another significant market signal that the world's two largest emitters are focused on tackling the climate crisis, and as a key geostrategic and trade partner of these nations, this has implications for Australia.

Albanese's attendance at APEC was specifically to show that Australia wants to be at the table with the other alliance members

as they navigate global decarbonisation, and that we are committed to working with our regional neighbours in the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF).

At the meeting, IPEF released a first-of-its-kind energy transition supply chain agreement and announced a new Critical Minerals Dialogue to assist the region in transitioning to clean energy. The dialogue will be central to Australia's positioning as a major player in the critical minerals and cleantech supply chain, and a foundation for our ambitions to be a zero-emissions trade and investment superpower.

We are still working to repair the 10 years in the international wilderness resulting from the climate inaction of the previous government. To do all of the above ... you need to be in the room where it happens.

Now, even more, Australia has to show countries with which we have co-operative partnerships and trade with on climate technology and critical minerals - such as China, Japan, Korea, India and the US - that we want to work with them.

We need to demonstrate that we have the capacity to partner with them to grow the development of sectors such as critical minerals, battery technologies and solar and wind resources that are needed to decar-

bonise all of our economies.

Australia also has a key role to play in supporting developing countries in their responses to the decarbonisation challenge. While the announcement for more support for Tuvalu's adaptation to climate change is important, it is just one country among many that is negatively impacted.

The release of the UN Environmental Program Emissions Gap report leaves no question about the urgency. With the world momentarily crashing through the feared 2 degrees Celsius of warming recently, far higher than the Paris Agreement goals, there is no choice.

The upcoming COP28 is the next important opportunity to focus attention and announce greater ambition.

Our Climate Capital Forum - an alliance of energy players, investors, climate finance experts and philanthropists - estimates that \$100 billion public strategic national interest capital investment is needed to "crowd-in" around \$300 billion of private capital to drive Australia's decarbonisation goals, an approach supported by the ACTU and major NGOs.

Investment obstacles and outdated financial structures need to be re-engineered to attract capital to new technology solutions.

We need to tax and enforce penalties for polluting sectors.

Shifting subsidies from fossil fuels to renewables, leveraging the \$3.5 trillion of capital in Australian superannuation funds and providing manufacturing tax credits to incentivise Australian companies and international partners to add value to our energy transition materials onshore are some of the key levers that the government can consider.

The community and business world at home and abroad want to understand how the Australian government sees the scope of the opportunity and how they can get on board.

By working together we can establish a loud-and-clear Australian market signal that decarbonising is where the country has to go to be a mover in the future world economy.

Through leadership and commitment, backed by a nation-building scale capital investment program, we can show that we are serious about the global transition to net zero.

Taking our seat at the table in international policy forums, as Albanese has done, is key to that.

Blair Palese is founder of the Climate Capital Forum, and director of philanthropy at Ethinvest.

More hikes just became less likely

To see what the RBA will do, it helps to look abroad. And recent events may make the future brighter for borrowers.

PETER
MARTIN



SINCE Australia's Reserve Bank hiked interest rates two weeks ago, there have been two important developments - one in the United States and the other in the United Kingdom.

If it's not clear to you why events overseas influence Australia's interest rates, which are meant to be set to control Australian inflation, read on.

US and UK inflation close to zero

We haven't been complete masters of our own destiny since the Australian dollar was floated 40 years ago next month.

What happened in the US last Tuesday was news of dramatically lower US inflation.

When increases and decreases in prices were taken together, overall US prices moved not at all in the month of October. That's right, inflation was zero.

While zero movement in one month doesn't mean zero over the entire year, it helps bring down the rate over the entire year. US inflation fell from 3.7 per cent in the year to September to 3.2 per cent in the month to October.

Then the next day we got similar news from the UK.

Taken together, prices in the United Kingdom scarcely grew at all in October, climbing just 0.1 per cent. The screeching halt to UK monthly inflation took the annual rate down from 6.7 per cent for the year to September to 4.6 per cent for the year to October.

In both the US and the UK, there's talk there will be no need for further interest rate hikes - and very probably a case for interest rate cuts - as soon as next year.

We don't yet know what happened to Australia's inflation rate in October - the Bureau of Statistics will tell us next week.

But we have an early indication.

The Melbourne Institute inflation gauge, which roughly tracks the bureau's measure, fell 0.1 per cent in October.

If that is what the bureau finds - that overall prices barely moved (or fell) in October - Australia's annual inflation rate should fall from 5.6 per cent for the year to September to around 5.2 per cent for the year to October.

Inflation down all over

All over the world, inflation is falling for much the same set of reasons: the price of oil is heading back down after Saudi Arabia and Russia tried to restrict supply in the middle of the year, and the price pressures caused by shortages are easing.

As Australia's Reserve Bank conceded in the minutes of the November board meeting, in which it pushed up rates, there has been "an easing in supply chain pressures and raw materials prices".

Not that this means the bank is relaxed about what's happening to inflation; far from it.

In the minutes released on Tuesday and in remarks delivered at a conference ahead of their release, Governor Michele Bullock said what concerned her was stronger-than-ex-

pected demand pressures. Australians remained keen to spend.

And she drew attention to disturbing "growing signs of a mindset among businesses that any cost increases could be passed onto consumers".

But what has just happened overseas will help, big time. Here's why.

Australians' buying power just jumped

As soon as the news of low US inflation came out last Tuesday, the US dollar slid.

Investors became less keen to hold US dollars when it became less likely that US interest rates would rise further, and a good deal more likely they would fall.

Against the Australian dollar, the US dollar fell 2 per cent. From an Australian's point of view, the buying power of an Australian dollar jumped from 63.7 to 64.9 US cents and has since jumped to 65.8 US cents.

This means that, for as long as it lasts, Australian dollars will buy more than they did.

Australians will pay less in Australian dollars for the goods and services ultimately paid for with US dollars.

The changed interest rate outlook in the US will act to keep Australian prices low.

In this way, decisions made in the US not to increase interest rates or even to cut them make it easier for Australia's Reserve Bank not to increase rates - or even to cut them.

A higher dollar means lower inflation

The effect isn't big. The RBA believes it takes a 10 per cent change in the value of the Australian dollar to move the Australian inflation rate 0.4 percentage points.

For the first time in a long time, the Reserve Bank of Australia has tail winds from overseas rather than headwinds. For the first time in a long time, the bank won't feel pressured to push up rates.

But it is better than things moving in the other direction, which is what has been happening until now.

For more than a year now, whenever interest rates have climbed in the US, Australia's Reserve Bank has been under pressure to push up its rates to stop the Australian dollar falling and prices climbing.

No longer.

After last week's news from the US and the UK, Australian financial markets began pricing in a close to zero chance of further rate rises and a fair chance of a cut next year.

It's always impossible to tell for sure what the Reserve Bank will do to rates.

A lot will depend on what actually happens to inflation.

But for the first time in a long time, the Reserve Bank has tail winds from overseas rather than headwinds.

For the first time in a long time, the bank won't feel pressured to push up rates just because rates have been pushed up overseas.

■ Peter Martin is economics editor of The Conversation and a former economics editor of The Canberra Times. He is a visiting fellow at the Crawford School of Public Policy.

■ This article was first published in The Conversation.



RBA Governor Michele Bullock. Picture by Elesia Kurtz

Forrest in billion-dollar green spree

ANDREW "Twiggy" Forrest's Fortescue Metals Group has announced three of the first green hydrogen deals ever to reach a final investment decision in the United States and Australia.

The board has approved the Phoenix hydrogen hub in the US, a green hydrogen project in Gladstone, Queensland, and a green iron trial plant in Western Australia.

But a Gibson Island green hydrogen and ammonia project in Queensland is yet to reach the investment milestone.

It "requires further work as Australia struggles to shed

its petro-state status and still suffers structurally high green electricity costs", the company said on Tuesday.

The estimated total investment in the three approved projects is approximately \$US750 million (\$1.1 billion) over the next three years.

Fortescue Energy's FY24 capital expenditure guidance was updated to \$US500 million from \$US400 million, while Fortescue Metals' FY24 capital expenditure was unchanged at up to \$US3.2 billion.

"With a disciplined approach to capital allocation, we continue to target double-digit project returns,"

This is the start of a pipeline of green energy projects we are dedicated to delivering.

Fortescue Energy CEO Mark Hutchinson

Fortescue Energy CEO Mark Hutchinson said. "This is the start of a pipeline of green energy projects we are dedicated to delivering."

The Phoenix hub comprises an 80 megawatt electrolyser and liquefaction facility with production capacity of up to 11,000 tonnes per year of liquid green hydrogen, with first production

planned for 2026.

The company said the hub was expected to qualify for a 10-year tax credit under US law of up to \$US3 per kilogram.

The project was also anticipated to indirectly benefit from a low carbon fuel standard credit scheme that has been adopted in California ahead of a ban on the sale

of combustion engine trucks by 2036.

The 50 megawatt project in Gladstone uses Fortescue's own electrolyser technology, with first production slated for 2025.

The green iron plant to be built at Christmas Creek will use existing green hydrogen and green electricity from solar generation, hematite and magnetite ore production capacity and existing infrastructure.

Fortescue Metals CEO Dino Otranto told reporters that new technologies would help the company to step away from the use of fossil fuels.

MARKET WATCH

THE DOLLAR

	BUYING	SELLING
USD	0.676	0.634
GBP	0.541	0.506
EUR	0.619	0.578
JPY	100.24	93.91
NZD	1.114	1.055

COMMODITIES

	CURRENT	MOVE
Gold \$US/o	1977.194	-2.814
Oil	82.03	+1.44

TOP 10 BY VALUE

	TRADED	CLOSE
BHP Group	453,691,528	47.40
CBA	203,193,182	103.70
Rio Tinto	202,587,423	127.37
CSL	176,467,044	256.80
Fortescue Met	139,526,229	25.47
James Hardie	128,879,976	48.67
ANZ Bank.ng	125,955,101	74.29
Macquarie Grp	120,926,159	168.74
Westpac Bank	102,501,980	21.29
Telstra	91,959,619	3.82

KEY STOCKS

	LAST	MOVE
AMP	865	+005
ANZ	24.29	+04
BHP Group	47.40	+66
CBA	103.70	+53
NAB	27.95	+02
News Corp	33.49	+21
Rio Tinto	127.37	+237
Telstra	3.82	+01
Westpac	21.29	+07
Woolworths	34.50	40

WORLD MARKETS

	LAST	MOVE
S&P ASX200	7078.2	+19.80
Au. Ores	7289.3	+20.60
Dow Jones	35,151.04	+203.76
NASDAQ	14,125.48	+11.81
S&P500	4514.01	+5.78
NIKKEI225	33,454.14	-33.89
NZSE 50	17,164.42	-43.04

Subdued 2024 predicted for property as rate pain hits home

LACKLUSTRE growth or even a mild correction in Australia's housing market has been forecast for 2024 by a key property analyst based on the belief higher interest rates will really start to bite.

SQM Research's managing director Louis Christopher is tipping the average dwelling price in Australia to grow by as much as 3 per cent, with the lower end of the base forecast range a 1 per cent decline.

The analyst's annual *Boom and Bust* report had mixed performance across Australia's big cities pencilled in.

Competitive rental markets and a recovering Chinese economy are expected to underpin another robust year of price growth for Perth and Brisbane housing markets.

But Mr Christopher said mild corrections or more modest gains could be expected across the other major cities, with Canberra facing a fall as steep as 8 per cent in 2024.

The analysts' base case



One analyst says most capitals will see flat or weaker house prices in 2024 as higher rates bite. Picture AAP

had small falls in Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra and Hobart, and either flat or modest gains in Adelaide and Darwin.

Mr Christopher said strong population growth

- though softer than in 2023 - plus a weaker pipeline of new builds should keep price falls in single percentage digits.

Nevertheless, with expected slowing employment growth and the correspond-

ing rise in unemployment, tipped to be towards 5 per cent by the year end 2024, this negative would more than offset another year of strong migration," he said.

The sharp increases to the

cash rate throughout 2022 and 2023 - and possibly into 2024 - were also anticipated to put the squeeze on those already paying off a mortgage as well as those hoping to buy.

Renewed optimism drives shares higher

THE local sharemarket has closed modestly higher for a second day on renewed optimism about the state of the global economy, while shrugging off a signal that domestic interest rates might soon rise yet again.

The benchmark S&P/ASX200 index on Tuesday finished 19.8 points higher, or 0.28 per cent, at 7078.2, while the broader All Ordinaries gained 20.6 points, or 0.28 per cent, to 7289.3.

Hawkish minutes from the Reserve Bank's November 7 meeting did little to derail

the day's gains, although the Australian dollar hit a four-month high after the readout was released.

The minutes indicated board members were committed to avoiding a growing mindset among businesses that any cost increases could be passed onto consumers, which could lead to a costly inflation spiral.

City Index market analyst Matt Simpson said the minutes read like the RBA was still set on another rate hike but would try to avoid one if possible.

With no RBA meeting in January, a hot consumer price index report next week could seal another 25 basis point "Christmas present to the masses", Mr Simpson wrote.

Mining was the biggest mover with a 1.4 per cent gain, with Rio Tinto adding 1.9 per cent to \$127.37, BHP up 1.4 per cent to \$47.40 and Fortescue climbing 0.7 per cent to \$25.47 after announcing it was moving forward on three green hydrogen deals.

Northern Star added 3.5

per cent to \$11.86 as the goldminer announced its drilling program had identified potential long-term growth opportunities across all three of its mining sites.

The Big Four banks all finished slightly higher, with CBA the biggest mover with a 0.5 per cent rise to \$103.70. Westpac added 0.3 per cent to \$21.29, ANZ gained 0.2 per cent to \$24.29 and NAB finished up 0.1 per cent to \$27.95.

Origin Energy dropped 2.9 per cent to a six-month low of \$8.28.

AGL powers energy debate

AGL has warned of delays to decarbonising the electricity grid from red tape and local opposition to the transmission required to supply Australia with clean energy. Chair Patricia McKenzie said on Tuesday decarbonisation would require significant new infrastructure to support a low-emissions electricity system and an unprecedented level of co-ordination. "Already we are seeing some challenges, including delays in approvals, cost

pressures and some local opposition to new generation and transmission projects," she told shareholders at the company's AGM. AGL pledged to work with customers, communities, industries and governments for an energy supply that is reliable and affordable. CEO Damien Nicks reaffirmed guidance of \$1.875 billion to \$2.175 billion for underlying earnings and \$580 million to \$780 million for underlying profit after tax.

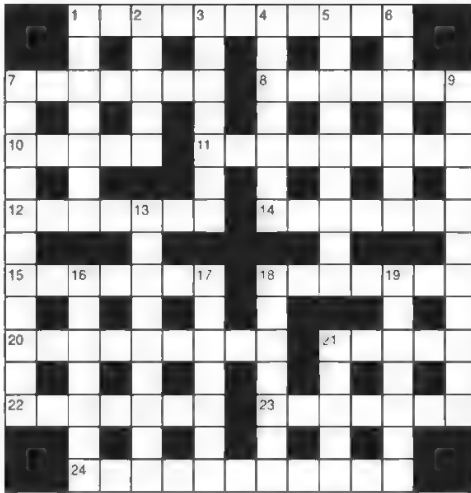
ENGLISH CRYPTIC CROSSWORD 30,592

ACROSS

- 1 What farm birds eat is peanuts (11)
 7 Dotty way of reading books, it's felt? (7)
 8 This could be used to make fools chatter on stage (7)
 10 Divided Conservative and Labour? (5)
 11 E.g. Scouse or Glaswegian in charge of philosophical debates (9)
 12 Harassed husband hurt after wife disappears (7)
 14 Wrap up in Sweden's capital, and walk unsteadily (7)
 15 Detective's amongst fans, those appearing without kit (7)
 18 Disheartened Ant or Dec changing style (3,4)
 20 Running away from work wearing silver or gold, say (9)
 21 Tesco operatives packaging what's put in ice cream (5)
 22 Ale is repeatedly drunk in predominantly Polish region (7)
 23 Admire Rashford's header playing United (7)
 24 Board game piece in drawer (11)

DOWN

- 1 Sight in Versailles – cat on water there (7)
 2 One allowed to catch finale of Jonathan Creek (5)
 3 Dad struggling with knee, which is massaged (7)



©Telegraph Media Group Limited 2021

- 4 Standard answer for who ruled Britain in AD 1100? (7)
 5 Joyful, old and superior member of an insect colony? (9)
 6 Doctor article newspaper journalist sketched out (7)
 7 People who finance banks give bribes (4-7)
 9 German composer turned up a piano part with'd flat (8,3)
 13 Complaint of diner having, say, sipped rum (9)
 16 Adult leaving El Dorado loaded showed great pleasure (7)
 17 That lady gets together with a big noise for affair (7)
 18 Try case of assault, arresting tense worker (7)
 19 Feeling of ecstasy going? (7)
 21 Unruly mob's problem accepting new monarch (5)

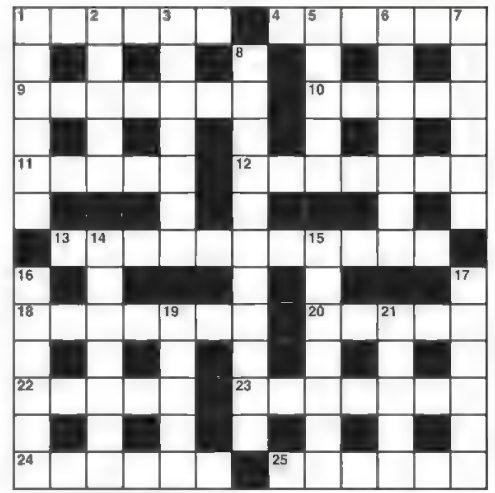
GEMINI CRYPTIC CROSSWORD 10,449

ACROSS

- 1 Dry and stony hill area (6)
 4 Way change of date may be expressed (6)
 9 Star able to work (7)
 10 This may cause a number to take up weapons (5)
 11 Run away from tunnel opening (5)
 12 Overburden journalists with work (7)
 13 Flexible binder used extensively in offices (7,4)
 18 Reliable way to stop bleeding (7)
 20 On the contrary it looks like a profit (5)
 22 It may be there in space (5)
 23 Odd native with Eastern simplicity (7)
 24 Brought to order it turned and passed on (6)
 25 Horrified – has the wrong tag showing outside (6)

DOWN

- 1 Acted like a vandal and was dismissed (6)
 2 Simply cannot love this part of poem (5)
 3 Noted visitor to the underworld (7)
 5 Vessel for man always on the move (5)
 6 Somehow trained in part payment (5-2)
 7 Material mother makes on request (6)



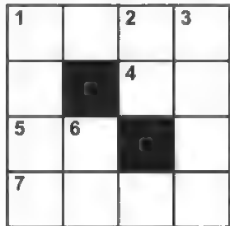
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- 8 Nothing is as strange or surprising (11)
 14 Lead on? (7)
 15 What the loser gets is punishment (7)
 16 Maintain a lock-up (6)
 17 Eager to be camping? (6)
 19 Steel or brass (5)
 21 Engagement ring? (5)

5X5 Insert the missing letters to make 10 words – five reading across the grid and five reading down.

C		A		P
	A		I	
A		O		E
	E		E	
S		E		S

TINY CROSS 1122



ACROSS

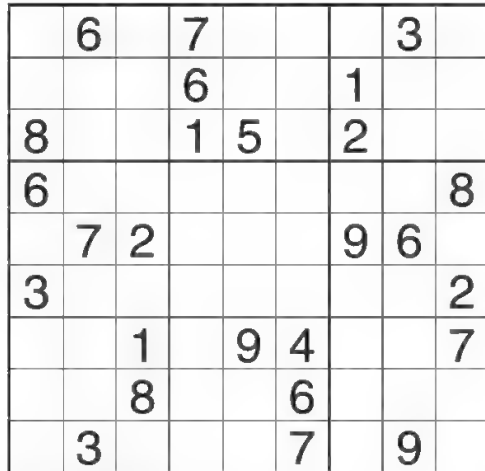
- 1 German car manufacturer (4)
 4 Belonging to (2)
 5 Short greeting (2)
 7 Jealousy (4)

DOWN

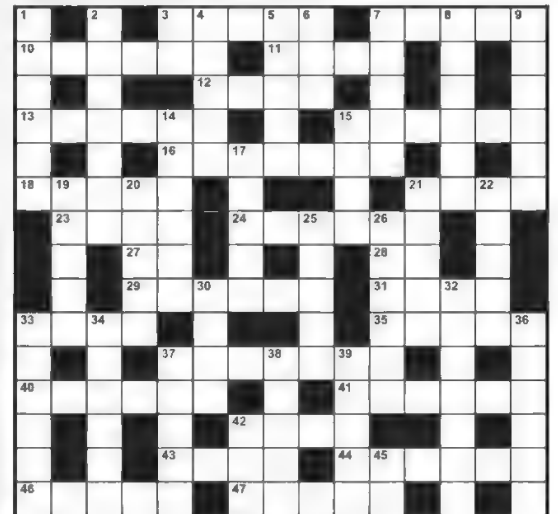
- 1 Pain (4)
 2 Execute (2)
 3 Uncertain (coll) (4)
 6 Popular, – crowd (2)

SUDOKU 129

You are given a 9x9 grid which has been divided up into nine 3x3 boxes. The aim of the game is very simple: to fill each row, column and 3x3 box with the numbers from 1 to 9 inclusive. Level of difficulty: Hard



QUICK CROSSWORD 298



ACROSS

- 3 Fed up
 7 Answer
 10 Wanders
 11 Petulant face
 12 Ensemble
 13 Flower type
 15 Larger
 16 Deep red
 18 Pifer
 21 Impel
 23 Killer whale
 24 Egyptian god
 27 Hello
 28 Myself
 29 Deleted
 31 Poke
 33 Parts of a play
 35 Tree
 37 Destructive wave
 40 Sound system
 41 Protective suit
 42 Absent
 43 Vending
 44 Spanish dance
 46 Flat-bottomed boat
 47 Groom

DOWN

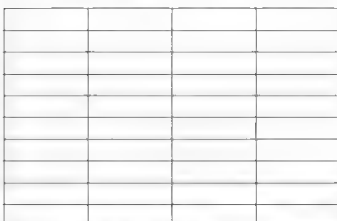
- 1 Compositions
 2 Visionary
 3 Near to
 4 Academy Award
 5 Bath salt
 6 Speck
 7 Blemish
 8 Boarder
 9 First course
 14 French pastry
 15 Wild pig
 17 Idols
 19 Subject
 20 Years
 21 Moochers
 22 Navigate
 25 New Delhi country
 26 Make worse
 30 And
 32 Against
 33 Soak up
 34 – Noah, comedian
 36 Slender
 37 Needle
 38 Up to date
 39 Possibly
 42 Swiss mountain
 45 Atop

9-LETTER 039



TODAY'S TARGET:

GOOD: 14 VERY GOOD: 18 EXCELLENT: 24+



Reference: Macquarie Dictionary.

2211 PUZZLES AND PAGINATION
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WORDFIND Theme: Birthday

The leftover letters will spell out a secret message.



ANNUAL
 BANNER
 BLESSING
 CAKE
 CHEERS

CLOWN
 DATE
 ENTERTAINMENT
 EVENT
 FAMILY

FESTIVE
 FRIENDS
 GAMES
 GRATITUDE
 GUESTS
 JOYFUL
 LAUGHTER
 LOVE
 MERRY
 MUSIC
 PARTY
 PICNIC
 PINATA
 PRESENTS
 PUNCH
 REFRESHMENT
 RELATIVES
 RIBBON
 RSVP
 SINGING
 SPEECH
 THANK YOU
 THEME
 TREAT
 WINE
 WISH
 YEAR

CROSSMATHS 129

Insert each number from 1 to 9 in the shaded squares to solve all the horizontal and vertical equations

Multiplication and division are performed before addition and subtraction.

+	+	-	=	5
+	x	x	=	315
x	+	÷	=	15
=	=	=		
23	9	6		

WEATHER

WOLLONGONG
 TODAY 23°C Partly cloudy

THU 18/22°C FRI 18/22°C SAT 19/23°C SUN 19/27°C MON 18/24°C TUE 17/22°C

BATEMANS BAY
 TODAY 24°C Possible shower

THU 15/24°C FRI 15/24°C SAT 15/26°C SUN 15/31°C MON 15/22°C TUE 13/21°C

CANBERRA
 TODAY 27°C Partly cloudy

THU 11/25°C FRI 12/24°C SAT 12/24°C SUN 12/24°C MON 11/24°C TUE 9/21°C

REGIONAL OUTLOOK

WARNINGS were current at 5pm yesterday.
www.bom.gov.au/australia/warnings
 1300 659 210 (cost of a local call)

CANBERRA

Partly cloudy. Slight chance of a shower, most likely afternoon and early evening. Chance of a thunderstorm afternoon and early evening. Light winds becoming east to southeasterly 15 to 25 km/h early afternoon then light late evening.

ILLAWARRA

Partly cloudy. Chance of fog inland early morning. Medium chance of showers. Chance of a storm about the Southern Highlands afternoon and early evening. Winds south to southwesterly 15 to 20 km/h tending south to southeasterly 20 to 30 km/h morning then light late evening.

SOUTH COAST

Partly cloudy. Slight chance of a shower. Light winds becoming south to southeasterly 15 to 25 km/h morning then light evening.

ILLAWARRA COASTAL WATERS

Port Hacking to Ulladulla
 Winds: Southwesterly 10 to 15 knots turning southerly 15 to 20 knots early morning.

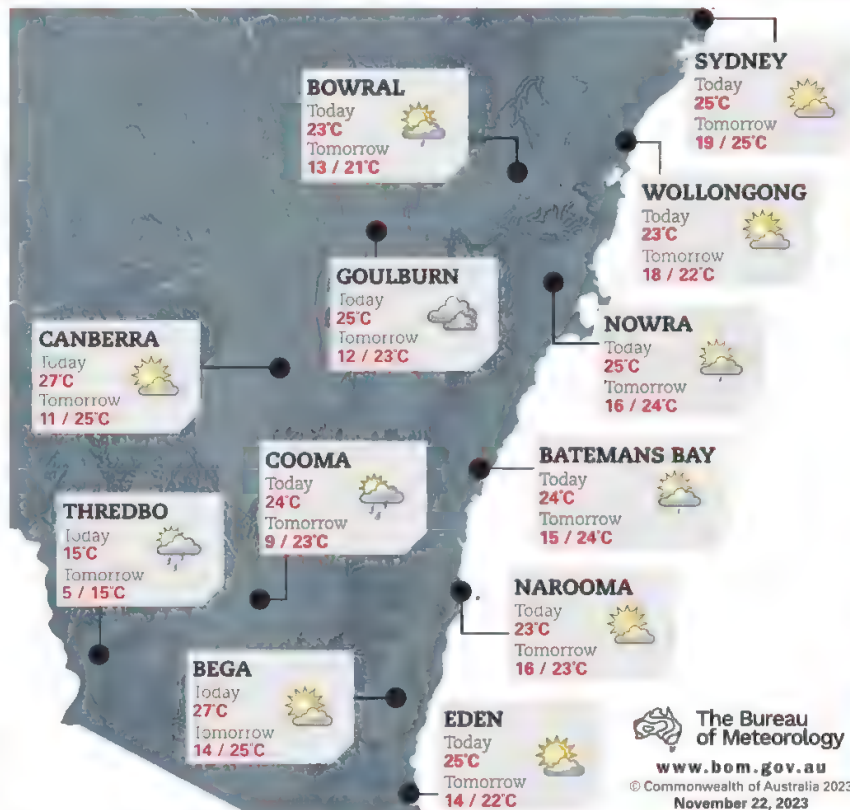
Winds reaching up to 25 knots inshore late morning. Seas: Below 1 m, increasing to 1 to 1.5 m morning. 1st Swell: Southerly around 1 m inshore, increasing to 1 to 1.5 m offshore around midday. 2nd Swell: Northeasterly 1 to 1.5 m, decreasing to around 1 m morning.

Weather: Partly cloudy.

BATEMANS COASTAL WATERS

Ulladulla to Montague Island
 Winds: Southerly 15 to 20 knots, reaching up to 25 knots offshore south of Moruya Heads afternoon. Seas: Below 1 m, increasing to 1 to 1.5 m morning. 1st Swell: Southerly below 1 m inshore, increasing to 1 to 1.5 m offshore morning. 2nd Swell: Easterly 1 to 1.5 m, tending northeasterly around 1 m morning.

Weather: Partly cloudy.



YESTERDAY

Location	**Max	Min	Rain*
Bega	27	15	4.0
Canberra	26	11	22.6
Cooma	18	10	7.0
Goulburn	26	7	1.4
Kiama	22	18	0.4
Merimbula	24	17	0.6
Moruya	23	13	0.8
Nowra	25	14	0.0
Thredbo	12	6	na
Tuggeranong	25	11	17.4
Ulladulla	22	16	0.0
Wollongong	22	18	0.0

THE TIDES

SYDNEY
 High 4:47am 1.4m 4:50pm 1.6m
 Low 10:32am 0.6m 11:24pm 0.4m

TOMORROW
 High 5:42am 1.5m 5:51pm 1.6m
 Low 11:43am 0.6m

PORT KEMBLA
 High 4:51am 1.3m 4:45pm 1.5m
 Low 10:31am 0.6m 11:25pm 0.3m

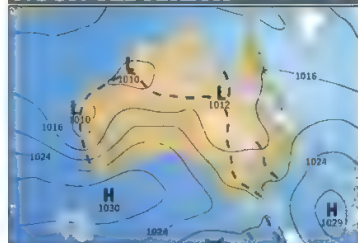
TOMORROW
 High 5:45am 1.4m 5:48pm 1.5m
 Low 11:42am 0.5m

EDEN
 High 4:56am 1.4m 4:43pm 1.6m
 Low 10:31am 0.7m 11:22pm 0.4m

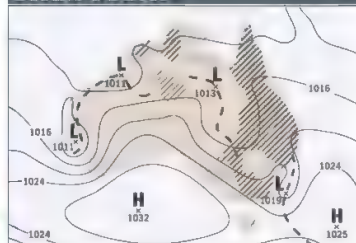
TOMORROW
 High 5:46am 1.5m 5:46pm 1.5m
 Low 11:44am 0.6m



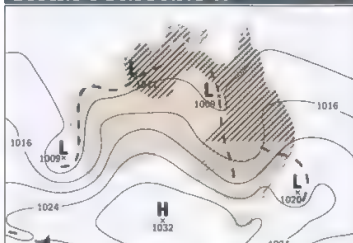
NOON YESTERDAY



10AM TODAY



10AM TOMORROW



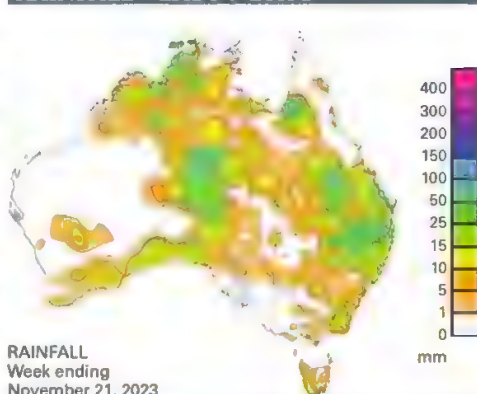
10AM FRIDAY



THE WORLD

Location	Weather	High	Low
Amsterdam	rain	12	6
Athens	showers	21	15
Auckland	showers	24	14
Bangkok	fine	33	23
Barcelona	sunny	19	9
Beijing	cloudy	16	2
Christchurch	fine	20	11
Frankfurt	cloudy	6	2
Helsinki	windy	1	-2
Hong Kong	sunny	26	21
Johannesburg	fine	32	18
Kuala Lumpur	storms	33	25
London	cloudy	10	6
Los Angeles	sunny	27	12
Moscow	fine	-5	-8
Noumea	sunny	27	20
Paris	sunny	9	5
Port Vila	showers	28	23
Rio De Janeiro	fine	39	23
Rome	cloudy	18	10
Seoul	cloudy	14	5
Singapore	storms	33	24
Suva	showers	31	21
Tel Aviv	fine	24	18
Tokyo	fine	20	8
Vancouver	sunny	9	5
Washington	sunny	13	9
Wellington	fine	21	12

RAINFALL - LAST 7 DAYS



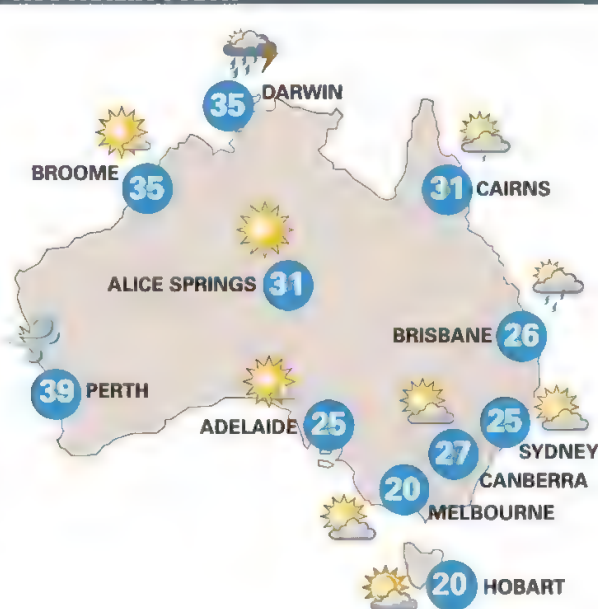
SUN & MOON

	SYDNEY	MELBOURNE	CANBERRA	HOBART
Rise	5:40am	5:56am	5:45am	5:32am
Set	7:42pm	8:17pm	7:54pm	8:21pm
Rise	2:10pm	2:34pm	2:18pm	2:21pm
Set	2:26am	2:56am	2:36am	2:52am

PHASES OF THE MOON

Full	Last	New	First
Nov 27	Dec 5	Dec 13	Dec 20

AUSTRALIA TODAY



ABOUT TOWN



Danielle Brenner from Dunlop, Sally Rice from Casey and Elena Brenner, 6, from Dunlop.



Kasie Nugent from Deakin, Nancy Alexander from Weston Creek and Samantha Wilk from Lyneham.



Max Robson from Acton and Aiden Dooley from Murrumbateman.



Dylan and Cameron Brick from Downer.



Jake Cameronne from Ainslie and Jock Sinclair from Red Hill.



Emma, 10, Belinda and Elizabeth, 13, Duke from Florey.

TRIVIA QUIZ

Compiled by Jean McLoughlin

- 1 In which year did Wilhelm Roentgen take the first x-rays?
- 2 Who was the primary author of the American Declaration of Independence?
- 3 Name the movie in which Paul Newman's character swallowed an enormous amount of eggs.
- 4 What did astronomer Clyde Tombaugh discover in 1930?
- 5 Who led his army to victory at the battle of Agincourt?
- 6 What type of material is slate?
- 7 Is green a primary or secondary colour?
- 8 Which comedic actor starred in the hit movie *Mrs Doubtfire*?
- 9 In which state or territory would you find the township of Bega?
- 10 The skin of the animated character Shrek is what colour?

TODAY'S SOLUTIONS

SUDOKU

1	6	5	7	4	2	8	3	9
9	2	7	6	3	8	1	4	5
8	4	3	1	5	9	2	7	6
6	1	9	2	7	3	4	5	8
5	7	2	4	8	1	9	6	3
3	8	4	9	6	5	7	1	2
2	5	1	3	9	4	6	8	7
7	9	8	5	1	6	3	2	4
4	3	6	8	2	7	5	9	1

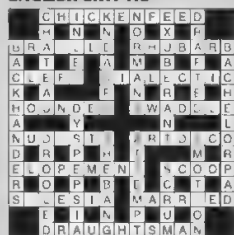
CROSSMATH

8	+	1	-	4	=	5
+		x		x		
5	x	7	x	9	=	315
x		+		+		
3	+	2	x	6	=	15
=		=		=		
23		9		6		

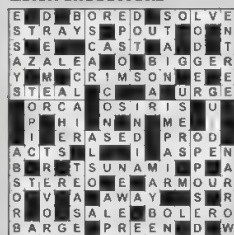
TRIVIA QUIZ

10. Green.
1. 1895
2. Thomas Jefferson
3. Cool Hand Luke
4. Pulp
5. King Henry V
6. Stone
7. Secondary
8. Robin Williams
9. New South Wales

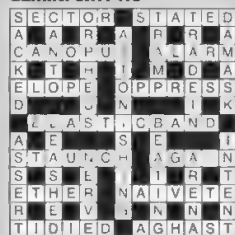
ENGLISH CRYPTIC



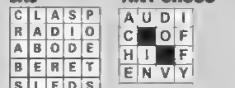
QUICK CROSSWORD



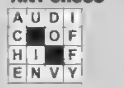
GEMINI CRYPTIC



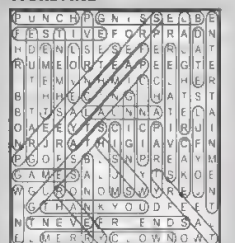
5X5



TINY CROSS



WORDFIND



Secret message:
For he's a jolly good fellow

HOROSCOPES

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astrologer@alisonmoroney.com

SAGITTARIUS

(NOV 22-DEC 21)

Persistence will get you everywhere, providing your objectives are right. You will examine your motivations during November 22-24.

PISCES

(FEB 19-MAR 20)

Your dreams will only become reality if you invest your effort in the right direction, and the solidity of friendships is tested by time. November 22-24 test both goals and friendships.

GEMINI

(MAY 21-JUN 20)

Wednesday is not a good time to approach the boss about a pay rise or bonus; nor is it a good time to discuss taxation or loan matters. Be practical about these matters.

VIRGO

(AUG 23-SEP 22)

Relationships are not the easiest things in the world to manage unless you are prepared to give. You must be content with giving more than you receive at the moment.

CAPRICORN

(DEC 22-JAN 19)

You will be wasting time trying to reach that unattainable person during November 22-24, as communications are delayed or blocked. Perhaps spend your day reviewing.

ARIES

(MAR 21-APR 19)

Time will seem to drag during November 22-24. Potentially, things can go wrong and you may be on your own. Take your time in dealing with the problems immediately.

CANCER

(JUN 21-JUL 22)

You may be disappointed with academic standards or with travel arrangements Wednesday to Friday. If possible, defer action to another time.

LIBRA

(SEP 23-OCT 22)

You seem to lack energy. Perhaps you have bitten off more than you can chew. Slow down and plough through the tasks one by one during November 22-24.

AQUARIUS

(JAN 20-FEB 18)

Use your energy wisely, particularly when it comes to assets and the generation of income. November 22-24 may place some strain on you: be strategic and play safe.

TAURUS

(APR 20-MAY 20)

Social opportunity is rather limited Wednesday to Friday. Rather than being depressed about it, spend time in working on the details of one of your dreams.

LEO

(JUL 23-AUG 22)

November 22-24 highlights potential financial difficulties for either yourself or your partner. This is not a time to assume added financial responsibilities.

SCORPIO

(OCT 23-NOV 21)

There may be difficulties in getting through to a romantic interest during November 22-24. You are rather listless, so it may be difficult to even find a distraction.



WEDNESDAY, November 22

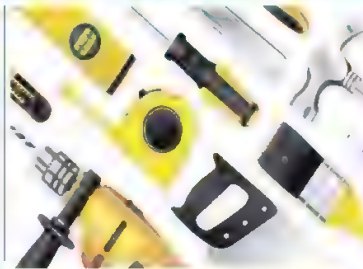
RATING ADVICE: (PG) Parental Guidance (M) Mature Audiences (MA15+) Mature Audiences Only **Please note:** Listings are correct at the time of print and are subject to change by networks.
CONSUMER ADVICE: a: adult themes; d: drug references; h: horror; l: language; n: nudity; s: sexual references; v: violence. CC: Closed Captions; b&w: Black & White; R: Repeat.

Trades & Services - OPEN FOR BUSINESS



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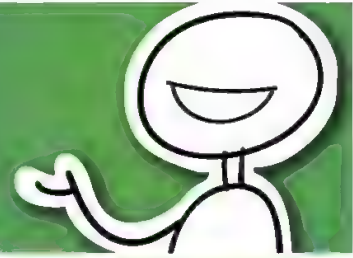


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Much loved Father and Father-in-Law of Uarota & Maria, Steve & Cait, Rae, Siona & Bree, and Failelupe and cherished adopted Father of 7.

Adored Grandfather of 17,
and Great-Grandfather of 9.

Forever in our hearts

The funeral service to celebrate the life of Amosa will be held in the chapel of Norwood Park Crematorium, Sandford Street, Mitchell on **FRIDAY, 24 November 2023**, commencing at 1:30pm.

Burial to follow at Gungahlin Cemetery.

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Brett Eric Armstrong

13 April 1978 - 19 November 2023

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Brett Eric Armstrong.

Cherished son of Terry and Julie.

Dear brother of Shane and Troy.

Loving father of Ethan,
Hayden and Abigail.

**He will be greatly missed by
all who knew him.**

A funeral service to celebrate Brett's life will be held in the chapel of Norwood Park Crematorium on **Tuesday 28 November** commencing at 10:30am.

All who knew and loved Brett are welcome to attend and pay their respects.



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ROBIN SUSANNE BLACKBURN

26 April 1934 - 4 November 2023

Loved wife of Brian (dec.)
Loving mother to Guy,
adored mother-in-law.
Devoted grandmother, aunt, cousin
and friend to many.

Forever in our hearts

A Funeral service for Robin will take place at Norwood Park Crematorium Outdoor Chapel, 65 Sandford Street, Mitchell ACT on

Monday, 27 November 2023,
commencing at **02:00 PM**

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Death Notices

Patrick Francis Selleck

19 January 1942 - 9 November 2023

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Best friend of Stephanie.

Father and father-in-law of
Graeme & Susan and Alan & Silvana.
Grandfather of Christopher, Catherine,
Mackenzie and Archer.

A Requiem mass to celebrate Pat's life
will be held at Sacred Heart Catholic Church,
Hodgson Crescent, Pearce, on
Monday, 27 November 2023
commencing at 1:30pm.

Privately cremated.



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AMY PATRICIA WILSON

(née CONSTANCE)

'PATTY'

21 August 1932 - 12 November 2023

Beloved wife of Keay (dec).
Dearly loved mother of Donald and
mother-in-law of Mali and Lisa.
Loving Nana of Robert, Stephanie,
Sarawoot (Fresh) and Araya (Hana).

A thanksgiving service to celebrate
Patty's life will be held in the
Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd,
Gillies Street, Curtin on **Friday,**
24 November 2023, commencing at 1pm.

Private cremation.



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Funeral Notices

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great-grandfather to Michael and Melissa
and their families.

A man of all seasons.

A celebration of John's life
will be held at the
Norwood Park Crematorium,
65 Sandford Street, Mitchell ACT
on **THURSDAY, 23 November 2023,**
commencing at 10:30 am.

Livestream can be accessed via the
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Deaths & Funerals

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Brodie, Al and Cameron

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attend Shelley's Funeral on Monday 27
November, 2023 at St Michael's Catholic
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Benjamin Scott

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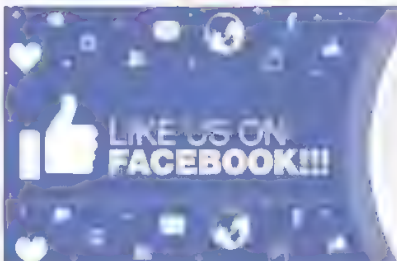
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SPORT

Staines keen to make a mark as Tigers solve roster puzzle

RUGBY LEAGUE

WESTS Tigers winger Charlie Staines has put an end to any uncertainty over his future, inking a fresh two-year deal to stay at the NRL club until the end of 2025.

Off-contract at the end of last season, Staines has technically spent the past

three weeks as an unsigned free agent with no contract for 2024.

The preference was always for the 23-year-old to remain at the club, but the Tigers needed to release players from their squad to accommodate that. That became possible on Tuesday, when

Triston Reilly and Brandon Webster-Mansfield were let go from the Tigers' top 30.

Staines had his first season with the Tigers interrupted this year, when a perforated bowel landed him in hospital and ruled him out for three months.

"It was a difficult first

season here for me with the ruptured bowel, but the club was so supportive through that time," Staines said.

"I want to have a strong pre-season and then hit the ground running next year.

"I love it here at Wests Tigers and I'm excited to be with this group for at least

another couple of years."

Staines was one of the best players in the NRL without a contract for next year, after winning a premiership with Penrith in 2022.

"We love what he brings not only as player but also as a person," Tigers coach Benji Marshall said. "We're

all looking forward to seeing Charlie play some great footy for this club."

Meanwhile, the Sydney Roosters have secured one of their brightest home-grown products on a two-year extension with 20-year-old forward Siua Wong wrapped up until 2026.



Corey Oates has signed a new one-year deal with Brisbane and must fight to regain his spot. Picture AAP

Oates vows to win back Broncos spot

RUGBY LEAGUE

BRISBANE winger Corey Oates has promised to fight for his position and his NRL career in what looms as a make-or-break 2024 season for the veteran flyer.

"I will be trying to prove to myself that I have still got it. Hopefully the coaches can see it and have belief in me," Oates said.

The 29-year-old signed a one-year contract extension last week after an injured-riddled year that limited him to just nine games, in which he failed to score a try.

Despite scoring 118 tries in 201 NRL games for the Broncos, Oates must face the reality that he is in a fierce battle for his future due to young gun Deane Mariner waiting for his chance.

Herbie Farnworth has gone to the Dolphins and that does open up a position for either 20-year-old Mariner or for regular 2023 winger Jesse Arthurs to make a switch to centre.

Arthurs was one of the best for Brisbane in the grand final and had a great year on the wing. Selwyn

Cobbo will be the other winger. Mariner can also handle the position but prefers centre.

Oates has to make a statement to edge out Arthurs or Mariner and he will need to do so early in the pre-season.

His injuries last season were "pure bad luck" in his own words.

Oates's jaw was broken in a tackle that led to North Queensland fullback Scott Drinkwater being suspended. He then suffered a posterior cruciate ligament injury that kept him on the sidelines.

While he was injured the Broncos kept winning and Oates was unable to claim his position back in the finals as coach Kevin Walters elected to stick with Arthurs and Cobbo.

"Jesse had a great season and deserved his spot," Oates said.

"There is always competition with young kids coming through every year.

"The older you get the harder it always is to keep your spot and prove your worth."

Popyrin replaces injured Kokkinakis in Davis Cup finals

TENNIS

ALEXEI Popyrin has replaced the luckless Thanasi Kokkinakis in the five-man Australian Davis Cup team ahead of the quarter-finals in Spain this week.

Coming off a career-best year during which he became Australia's second highest-ranked player, 24-year-old Popyrin will join the team as a singles option alongside world No.12 Alex de Minaur.

Popyrin beat Swiss veteran Stan Wawrinka in the final of the Croatia Open in

July, which was his second ATP Tour title, while he also scored three top-10 wins with his ranking rising from outside the top 100 in March to peak at world No.39 last month.

Jordan Thompson and Max Purcell are also in the mix for the second singles rubber while Purcell will link with his Wimbledon title partner Matt Ebden, who last week reached the semi-finals of the ATP Finals doubles competition with his Indian partner Rohan Bopanna.

Kokkinakis was forced to

withdraw from the historic team tournament after a setback with an ankle injury.

"(Kokkinakis) played a tournament in Sydney a few weeks ago and twisted his ankle," Australia captain Lleyton Hewitt said in a statement.

"He was working through that, and then he had another little setback in training about a week ago."

With in-form de Minaur spear-heading the Australian campaign, which opens against the Czech Republic on Wednesday (Thursday

AEDT), Hewitt said he felt comfortable with the late change.

"To be honest, we had a lot of options, so I feel very comfortable with Alexei coming in," Hewitt said.

"He's had his career-best year on the ATP Tour this year, and we've got a lot of options in our singles but also in our doubles as well.

"Whoever we end up putting out there on the court I know is going to perform well and leave it all out there for us, and we've got full belief in all the boys."



Alexei Popyrin (21) has replaced Thanasi Kokkinakis (1) in Australia's Davis Cup Finals squad.

Canberra 'can do more' to boost crowds

SOCCER

Melanie Dinjaski

A-LEAGUE Women crowds have been increasing after World Cup fever hit Australia this year, but one Canberra United star believes more can be done to make the most of the sport's momentum.

A record attendance of 2229 turned out for Canberra's last home game at McKellar Park three weeks ago, and another bumper crowd is expected this Sunday for United's clash with Newcastle.

The appetite for women's sport has never been higher with more than 1000 regularly attending Capitals home WNBL games, the Canberra Chill attracted a Hockey One record attendance of 2281 at their last Lynham fixture, and 2889 were at the Raiders' NRLW end-of-season home game in September.

But looking at how other A-League Women clubs have attracted even bigger crowds following the World Cup, does leave room for United to make their attendance figures even stronger.

United's next opponent the Newcastle Jets had 3207 at their home game last weekend, and Canberra's next closest A-League team Sydney FC had an astounding 11,471 fans in their record-setting season-opener.

"I think you always can do more," United's Chilean international Maria Rojas told *The Canberra Times*.

"We are on the right path to keep building. After the World Cup, hopefully Canberra United can take advantage of it.

"We broke the crowd record last time we were at McKellar Park and that was a great step for Canberra United. I hope this weekend we can achieve the same or even better."

Rojas said she's seen first-hand the impact

and growth in the women's game off the back of the World Cup, with young boys she coaches naming Sam Kerr as their favourite player over Socceroos.

Rojas is doing her bit to boost crowd numbers too, with a passionate Chilean fan base following her.

"It's always great to see people from Chile," she said. "We have a big community in Canberra and Sydney, and they are very excited to support us and watch us play good football.

"Many have already messaged me that they're looking forward to the weekend, and I know a few people have got their membership recently as well."

Rojas first played for United in 2018, then had stints in the A-League with Adelaide, Sydney and Melbourne City, but she returned to Canberra this season, enthused by coach Njegosh Popovich's attacking style

and championship ambitions.

"Canberra holds a really special place in my heart," Rojas said. "We have a really young, talented team and I do believe in us to make the finals."

United are still searching for their first win of the season, and have been hurt by a rough schedule that included two postponed games. Even though the interruption has been "extremely hard" on the squad, Rojas is feeling confident United can deliver a much-needed victory against the Jets.

"You want to get those three points, not just for us, but also for our fans," she said.

Two Canberra players, defender Sasha Grove and goalkeeper Chloe Lincoln, were named in the Young Matildas squad on Tuesday. They will play China in a two-match international series on December 3 and 6, building toward the Under-20 Women's Asian Cup in Uzbekistan next year.



Both Canberra Croatia and Gungahlin United still hope to be part of Football Australia's national second division. Picture by Elesia Kurtz

Canberra clubs still chasing second division

David Polkinghorne

THEY didn't make the first cut, but both Canberra Croatia and Gungahlin United are intent on making the final one.

Football Australia announced eight clubs would be part of the 2025 national second division on Monday - all of which were either from NSW or Victoria.

But they also said they wanted to add a further two or four clubs to make either a 10- or 12-team competition.

Both Gungahlin United and Canberra Croatia will

meet with Football Australia next week to discuss what areas each club had to strengthen in their respective bids.

But both told *The Canberra Times* of their intentions to be part of the second tier when it kicks off in 2025.

Originally it was going to start in 2024, but that's been pushed back as Football Australia looked to finalise the clubs by April next year.

It's believed the large operational costs of participating were a sticking point for a lot of the clubs who didn't make the final eight - without any guarantees of

financial returns from things like TV rights.

It's also believed clubs were expected to produce a bank guarantee of about \$750,000.

The eight clubs announced were Apia Leichhardt, Avondale, Marconi Stallions, Preston Lions, South Melbourne, Sydney Olympic, Sydney United and the Wollongong Wolves - making it a national second tier in name only.

Gungahlin president Neil Harlock said they would continue to push to be a part of the competition that will sit below the A-League Men.

"We're very keen and we think 2025 is very reasonable and a better shape for the competition to be perfectly honest," Harlock said.

"Our plan was to be there eventually - whether that was 2024, 2025 or 2026.

"An A-League Men coming in is fantastic. I still think there's enough football in Canberra it can support a second division team too."

Football Australia also planned to set-up an NPL Champions League, which would consist of group and knockout stages and would begin at the end of the 2024 NPL seasons.

A women's champions league was planned for 2025.

It was expected second division clubs would still be allowed to field teams in their respective NPL leagues.

Croatia vice-president Vlado Vrkic said they would continue to push to play in the second division.

"We're Canberra's most successful club. We always want to achieve at the highest level possible," Vrkic said.

"If we can further the club and give our players an opportunity to play at an even more elite level then that's what we're all about."

Canberra A-League bid slips behind

David Polkinghorne

CANBERRA'S A-League Men's bid is starting to fall behind its Auckland counterpart as a nominal early December deadline draws closer.

Auckland's billionaire owner William Foley was officially awarded a full A-League licence on Tuesday after he was provisionally announced last month.

The Auckland team has appointed Nick Becker as their chief executive, with the club also boasting a new website - AKLfootball24.com. But they're still finalising a name, colours, a training facility and a home ground.

Foley's preference was for the "Black Knights" - a pointer to the Black Knight companies and NHL team Las Vegas Golden Knights he owns.

An Auckland men's team will enter the A-League next season, while they'll enter a women's side a year later.

It's believed there's at least two potential investor groups interested in Canberra, with *The Canberra Times* revealing both groups toured the capital at the start of November.

A-Leagues commissioner Nick Garcia told *The Canberra Times* last month he hoped to have a Canberra owner in place in early December to give the club enough time to prepare to sign players in the January transfer window.

While the Canberra bid was yet to land an owner, it does have Canberra Stadium as a potential home ground - and a funding arrangement with the ACT government.

Shackles off Sydney FC as they prepare for Wanderers derby

A-LEAGUE MEN

BUOYED by their first win of the season, Sydney FC are bent on toppling fierce rivals Western Sydney in their latest A-League men derby.

With only two days to prepare under new coach Ufuk Talay, Sydney showed their mettle with a 5-1 clobbering

of Adelaide United last time out to set up the first hotly anticipated clash of the campaign against the Wanderers.

Marko Rudan's Western Sydney are top of the table, above Melbourne Victory, Wellington and Macarthur FC on goal difference, while the Sky Blues sit tenth with

only one win from four going into Saturday's meeting.

Young midfielder Jaiden Kurchaski says the players have full belief in their new coach, who has vowed to restore Sydney to their past glory as a powerhouse of Australian football since replacing Steve Corica.

Kurchaski was electric in the relentless performance against the Reds, notching a brace and an assist to complement star winger Joe Lolley's two goals and two assists.

"If you don't have confidence in your manager and the players around you,

there's no point in playing," Kurchaski said on Tuesday.

"He wants us to win trophies and that's definitely portrayed in training and the way he acts around the club.

"Especially after that win on the weekend, we're definitely ready for the derby this weekend."



Ufuk Talay

Defending champs Italy qualify for Euros

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

ITALY will defend their European Championship title next year in Germany after a 0-0 draw with Ukraine was enough to secure their place.

The game was technically a home fixture for Ukraine, but was played at Bayer Leverkusen's stadium in Germany because of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The result came as something of a surprise after both teams created plenty of chances on Monday night (Tuesday AEDT). Italy stayed devoted to coach Luciano Spalletti's all-action attacking style despite needing only to avoid defeat.

Federico Chiesa, Giovanni di Lorenzo and Davide Frattesi all missed excellent chances in the first half for the Azzurri.

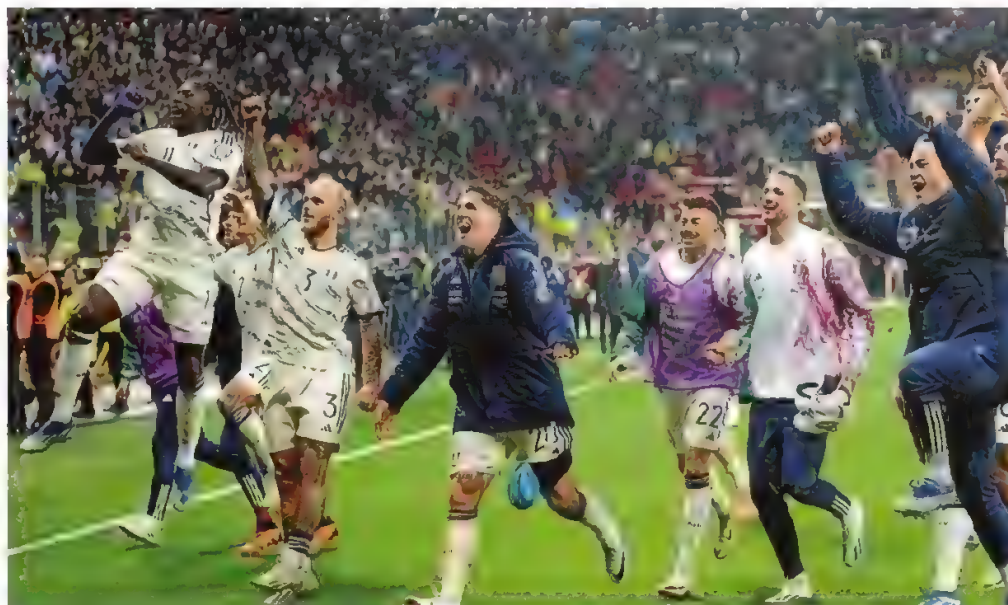
Ukraine, who were angered by a decision not to give them a penalty in added time for what seemed like a trip on Mykhailo Mudryk by Bryan Cristante, could still qualify for Euro 2024 via the playoffs.

"We are very happy. We are where we deserve to be, after all the difficulties that we had," Italy captain and goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma said.

Elsewhere in Group C, England completed an unbeaten qualifying campaign with a drab 1-1 draw at North Macedonia.

England captain Harry Kane forced an equaliser via an own goal just seconds after coming on as a substitute in the 58th minute. Now with Bayern Munich, the former Tottenham Hotspur striker is in a rich vein of form having scored 21 goals in 16 games in all competitions for the German club. He sits top of the Bundesliga scoring charts, has already hit three hat-tricks and netted from inside his own half.

The own goal cancelled out the opener from Enis Bardhi, who tucked away a rebound after his penalty was saved by England goalkeeper Jordan Pickford in the 41st minute.



Italy players celebrate qualifying for Euro 2024 after their scoreless draw with Ukraine in Germany. Picture AP

We are very happy. We are where we deserve to be, after all the difficulties that we had.

Gianluigi Donnarumma

The spot kick was awarded when Rico Lewis - the Manchester City defender making his England debut - was adjudged to have struck Bojan Miovski in the face with

his hand as he made a clearing header.

England had already secured qualification for next year's tournament and finished with six wins and two draws, six points clear of second-placed Italy.

"I think after the qualifying we've had it was always going to be tough here but we dug in and got a point," Kyle Walker told Channel 4.

"It's football. It's been a short week, two games when we've already qualified. No excuses, we know we should be taking three points from here but it's something to work on for the future."

In Group E, the Czech Republic easily

beat 10-man Moldova 3-0 to book their ticket to the finals.

The win means the 1996 runners-up will play in their eighth successive Euros after finishing second, level on 15 points with Albania, who drew 0-0 with Faroe Islands.

In Group H, Benjamin Verbeic scored a late winner as Slovenia secured their qualification, but opponents Kazakhstan will have to earn their place through March's playoffs following the 2-1 loss.

Group winners Denmark wrapped up their campaign with a 2-0 defeat in Northern Ireland, while Finland won 2-1 at San Marino.

Ivoriens keep perfect record

WORLD CUP

IVORY Coast's winning start to World Cup qualifying has continued with a 2-0 victory over Gambia as they were among five countries who had away success in group matches.

Goals from Christian Kouame and Seko Fofana ensured success for the fancied Ivoriens in Dar-es-Salaam on Tuesday, where Gambia hosted the game because their own stadiums were not deemed fit enough to host international matches.

Also victorious on the

road were Equatorial Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya and Madagascar, while Mali were held to a surprise home draw as Africa's preliminaries for the 2026 World Cup finals continued.

The Ivoriens, who will host January's African Cup of Nations, are now top of Group F, level on six points with second-placed Gabon, while Kenya moved into third spot on three points after their 5-0 win over the Seychelles.

That game was hosted in Abidjan in the Ivory Coast with the Seychelles another

of the 19 African countries banned from using their home stadia.

Michael Olunga scored twice in the opening six minutes for Kenya, fresh from a two-year FIFA ban, with Masoud Juma adding a third before the break. Rooney Onyango and substitute Benson Omala scored two more in the second half.

Equatorial Guinea captain Emilio Nsue got the winner as the Group H leaders triumphed away to 10-man Liberia, netting after nine minutes.

MEMORABILIA

SEVERAL Australians spent their World Cup last-16 match with Argentina in Qatar trying to get hold of Lionel Messi's shirt, before Cameron Devlin cheekily snagged it after the final whistle.

Now the opportunity has arisen to get hold of the guernsey the little magician wore in the first half of the match, during which he scored the opening goal.

Messi (pictured) is putting it up for auction along with five other shirts he wore as Argentina won the World



Cup. They include the one he wore in the final itself when he scored twice in the 3-3 draw against France that preceded Argentina's penalty shoot-out win.

There's just one problem for any Soccerero eager to gr-

ab a memento of their match - the price.

The shirts are expected to fetch a collective \$A15 million, threatening the world record for sports memorabilia.

That is currently the \$A15.4 million paid for Michael Jordan's 1998 NBA Finals jersey. The record for a game-worn soccer shirt is \$A14 million for Diego Maradona's from Argentina's 1986 quarter-final 2-1 victory over England, in which Maradona scored his infamous "Hand of God" goal.

Messi's guernsey up for grabs

Rauf adds to Pakistan problems for Aussie tour

'Disrespectful' World Cup frivolity another iconic trophy moment

FAST bowler Haris Rauf has pulled out of the Pakistan squad for next month's three-Test tour of Australia.

Three front-line quicks - Naseem Shah, Ihsanullah and Mohammad Hasnain - had already been ruled out because of injuries forcing Pakistan to call up uncapped pacer Khurram Shahzad.

He is one of three uncapped players named in an 18-member squad on Monday night. The others were left-handed opening batter Saim Ayub and allrounder Amir Jamal.

New chief selector Wahab Riaz said Rauf pulled out on Sunday night despite confirming his availability two days ago.

"He (Rauf) gave his consent, but later he changed his mind because he was worried about his fitness and the workload," Riaz said in Lahore while announcing the squad. "His absence will affect the team combination."

Riaz said the medical panel of the Pakistan Cricket Board informed him that there were no fitness issues with Rauf. The chief selector and team director Mohammad Hafeez later sat together with Rauf, but the fast bowler pulled out at the last moment.

Shahzad, 23, was named alongside experienced bowlers Shaheen Afridi and Hasan Ali. Jamal, who has represented Pakistan in T20s against England, is in the squad as a seam-bowling allrounder.

Pakistan beat Sri Lanka 2-0 in their opening WTC series in Sri Lanka, but it will be a huge task for new skipper Shan Masood when Pakistan play in Perth, Melbourne and Sydney.



Travis Head with the Cricket World Cup, Mal Meninga after the Raiders won the 1989 grand final, and John Eales with the Rugby World Cup. Pictures Twitter, David James Bartho, Nick Wilson

Melanie Dinjaski

THE Australian cricket team have caused some controversy in their Cricket World Cup celebrations after defeating India in the tournament final, and it's not the first time drama has followed trophy winners.

It adds another chapter to Australia's history of iconic - albeit sometimes too-rowdy - celebrations with championship trophies.

All-rounder Mitch Marsh became the target of millions of Indian cricket fans when he had the audacity

to pose for a photo with the World Cup trophy, using the silverware like a footstool.

The image posted by Australian skipper Pat Cummins on Instagram led to social media exploding with outrage from Indian media, influencers and fans all slamming Marsh's actions.

One cricket analyst went as far as to call Marsh "disrespectful", "shocking", and "disgusting".

The celebrations at the hotel are likely to cement World Cup hero Travis Head with legendary status among his teammates and

Australian cricket fans if the post-final images that flowed on social media are anything to go by.

With the location of the World Cup final in Ahmedabad - a state where alcohol is prohibited unless foreigners have a permit to do so - the cricket team waited until they were back at the hotel to kick off what looked like a *buoyant* after-party.

Head snapped a pic of himself sipping from a tequila mug with teammate Marcus Stoinis, and it appears the team continued

their celebrations on the golf course, with recent cart accident victim Glenn Maxwell.

Showing no signs of trauma from his concussion ordeal, Maxwell comfortably took part in a round shoeless, cheered on by Cummins and other teammates.

Meanwhile, leg-spinner Adam Zampa took great pleasure in reminding Australia's critics that he'd been noting their comments, where many didn't rate the green and gold's World Cup chances after losing their opening matches.

Zampa posted an image

of a torn page entitled "receipts" along with shots of the team relishing their six-wicket win over India in the final.

While the seemingly harmless frivolity ruffled some feathers, it's not the first time celebrations with trophies have been at the centre of some controversy in Australian sport.

In Canberra, Raiders great Laurie Daley famously dropped the 1989 premiership trophy off the back of a ute during a victory parade through Queanbeyan, blaming a sudden hit of the

Veteran's T20 withdrawal opens up the door for Smith

AUSTRALIA'S selectors have withdrawn David Warner from the Twenty20 series against India, paving the way for Steve Smith to trial as an opener for next year's World Cup in the format.

Warner was on Tuesday officially ruled out, given the chance to return home and rest before his final Test series against Pakistan.

The opener's withdrawal serves as another blow to what looms as one of the most overlooked Australian series in recent memory.

If ever there needed to be

a reminder about cricket's cluttered calendar, this five-match series is it.

The opening game will be played in Visakhapatnam, just four days after India and Australia played in the 50-over World Cup final.

The hosts named their squad for the series on Tuesday, with Suryakumar Yadav the sole player who featured in the 50-over decider available for the first three matches.

Matches will also be played in Thiruvananthapuram, Barsapara, Nagpur and

Hyderabad, with Australia having never played in the first two of those cities before.

By series end, Australia will also have played 26 matches in India in 2023, with four Tests and three ODIs earlier in the year, before another bilateral series in September and then the ODI World Cup.

Cricket is still in catching up contractually-obligated matches from COVID, with a raft of other series meaning these games did not fit earlier in the year.

The series is theoretically

the beginning of preparations for next year's T20 World Cup in the Caribbean and USA.

But India's squad also only includes three players who featured in last year's 20-over event.

Smith has spoken about his desire to open the batting, and will likely be able to now do so with Travis Head after Warner's exit. Warner has been replaced in the squad by young allrounder Aaron Hardie, giving the likes of he and Tanveer Sangha the chance to impress.



Veteran opener David Warner has pulled out of Australia's five-game T20 series against India.



Mitch Marsh has a rest and Travis Head with Marcus Stoinis (left) say 'cheers' to a successful World Cup campaign. Pictures Instagram



accelerator for the slip-up.

At Civic a huge crowd met the Raiders at the end of the parade, with Mal Meninga hoisting the trophy with a towel wrapped around it, comically keeping it together.

"It was either me or the trophy going overboard, so I did the honourable thing and saved myself," Daley later joked. "We did smash the base. We did a job on it."

The night before Daley's mishap with the trophy, the Raiders also accidentally shattered the glass cabinet holding the JJ Giltinan

Shield. It used to be awarded to the premiers and in the NRL today it's given to the year's minor premiers.

Former Raiders chairman John McIntyre kept that last incident secret for 19 years before revealing all in 2008. "That was kept very quiet," McIntyre told *The Canberra Times* years later.

"We took that to a friend and he repaired that before any media woke up to it."

The modern NRL trophy was damaged similarly to the Daley incident in 2021 by the Penrith Panthers too, along with some other

questionable celebrations that led league bosses to investigate.

The Wallabies were also guilty of some trophy controversy following their 1999 World Cup win. The Webb Ellis Cup affectionately nicknamed "Bill" by the players had an update to its steel plate.

Days before it was scheduled to be shown off at a victory parade, Rugby Australia executives discovered that "Webb Ellis" on the trophy had been scratched out with "Bill" inscribed, which required a prompt repair.

Bancroft puts hand up as PM's XI baggy green tussle looms

Cameron Mee

FORMER Australian opener Cameron Bancroft has declared he is ready to return to the Test arena with the upcoming Prime Minister's XI clash shaping as the perfect launch pad.

The batter has endured a torrid three years since his last Test against England during the 2019 Ashes.

Bancroft has not represented his country since he was dropped after the second match but David Warner's upcoming retirement has left the door open for a return.

The 37-year-old intends to play the opening three Tests of the summer before ending his red-ball career on his home turf at the SCG.

Selectors are planning to use next month's four-day Prime Minister's XI clash against Pakistan as a shootout for Warner's position, with Bancroft one of three batters in the mix.

The 31-year-old is set to be named alongside Marcus Harris and Matt Renshaw in the team expected to be unveiled on Thursday.

Bancroft has made no secret of his desire to make the opener position his own and on numbers alone should be the frontrunner.

"I don't deny that like every player in the country I would love an opportunity to play for Australia again," he said.

"That is certainly one of my goals.

"But when I walk out, I'm purely focused and present on what can I do for the team today."

For so long a more relaxed event, the Prime Minister's XI has morphed into a genuine selection trial since becoming a four-day fixture last summer.

Emerging spinner Todd Murphy used the game as a platform for a Test call-up on this year's tour of India and 2022 captain Josh Inglis played a key role in Australia's recent World Cup triumph.

Cameron Green will use this season's Prime Minister's XI clash as a key lead-in game to the opening Test of the summer in Perth with experienced bowler Michael Neser also likely to be named for the clash at Manuka Oval.

An Australian recall would end three years in the wilderness for Bancroft, with the opener revealing earlier this summer



Cam Bancroft has put his hand up for Test selection. Picture AAP

he hoped he had paid his dues for sandpapergate, after attracting headlines again for comments around the saga in 2021.

He was the leading run-scorer in the Sheffield Shield last summer, and tops the charts this season with 505 runs at an average of 63.12 with one round to go before the BBL break.

"The more you play, hopefully the more you improve," Bancroft said.

"If an opportunity presents itself, I'd like to think that I've improved my game. But I understand that it's a long journey as well.

"I'm still learning. I'm just trying to keep that mindset there. It gives you space for growth and perspective. And I think that's really important in cricket."

Bancroft's runs put him ahead of rivals Renshaw (305 at 33.88) and Harris (273 at 39) in this summer's Shield, with both showing spurts of form.

Bancroft averaged 30.92 in his first eight Tests before the ball-tampering scandal, but like all openers struggled to handle the swinging Dukes ball in the 2019 Ashes.

"The moving ball is hard work. It's not easy to play. You need a bit of luck," he said.

"I try and go out and do my best and hopefully learn from the experiences that have come, like that one. And try and be a better player for it moving forward."

With AAP

Govt lodges vision to create AIS 'sport and health precinct'

From back page

It looms as the most significant development for the AIS since the residential scholarship program was disbanded a decade ago.

The review will seek to inform government how "best to invest in sports facilities to ensure the AIS remains fit-for-purpose in supporting high performance athletes", and the facilities required in the build up to the 2032 home Games.

There have been rumblings for several years about relocating the AIS to



Andrew Barr wants to partner with the federal government to build a new stadium at Bruce instead of Civic.

Queensland to take advantage of a more favourable climate, but the Queensland government opted against

making a submission to the panel.

It puts Canberra in a strong position to retain the

AIS, which will accelerate ACT Chief Minister Andrew Barr's hopes of building a new stadium, or refurbishing the existing Canberra Stadium, within 10 years.

The government has already committed to a \$1 billion northside hospital to be built on the Calvary site.

"A number of medical and sports medicine start-ups are emerging and the ACT government's commitment through the development of Canberra's northside sport and health precinct will support an environment

to foster innovation and growth of these start-ups in close proximity to the AIS," the submission said.

The government signed a memorandum of understanding with the Australian Sports Commission this year to jointly form a plan to revitalise the AIS, including reopening the AIS Arena, the stadium plan and the potential of on-site hotels, restaurants, cafes and bars.

It said the stadium would drive economic activity and improve fan experience.

"The ACT government

strongly believes the best option for the future of AIS infrastructure is investment in the facilities in Canberra which have served the nation's sporting elite for 40 years," the submission said. "The 2018 Masterplan commissioned by the former Commonwealth Government found that the AIS campus could be improved at a cost of \$200 million.

"Due to cost escalation in the construction sector over the past five years, this number is likely to be somewhat higher today."

SPORT

Walloos eye investment as wealthy rivals chase top stars

RUGBY UNION

Cameron Mee

WALLAROOS high-performance boss Jaime Fernandez is confident rugby union and rugby league can put aside their differences to grow women's sport.

The two sports have engaged in a tense battle for athletes in a limited player pool, with the cashed-up NRLW clubs luring multiple stars away from union.

Former Brumbies forward Grace Kemp made a successful transition to the Canberra Raiders this year and has welcomed the increased opportunities that have arisen since the move.

There is currently scope for players to feature in both the NRLW and Super W competitions as their seasons do not overlap however this will diminish as the leagues expand in the coming years.

The rapid rise in rugby league wages also shapes as a key battleground, with cash-strapped union unable to compete financially with the rival codes.

Fernandez is optimistic the sports can work together and said rugby can't afford to enter a pay war.

"It's difficult," he said. "Maybe there's an ability to coexist and work together. At the same time, it's not so much about trying to beat someone as opposed to how do you support the people we have? How do we invest in the players that have committed to us?"

"That's the way to go rather than worrying about who else is doing what. Let's look after the good people who have been really invested in our program and working with us."

Fernandez stepped into his new job at a pivotal time for women's rugby in Australia.



Walloos high-performance boss Jaime Fernandez is pushing for more investment in the program. Picture University of Canberra

The sport is rapidly professionalising worldwide and there is a desire to turn the Wallaroos into an elite side before the nation hosts the 2029 World Cup.

Finances, however, shape as a major restriction in these efforts.

Rugby Australia announced a \$2 million increase in funds earlier this year and is currently in the process of finalising an additional investment for 2024 and beyond.

New RA chairman Daniel Herbert acknowledges his organisation has failed to prioritise women's XVs in the past but said it will be a key focus during his tenure.

"It's been well documented our financial position is not at its best," Herbert said. "We need to make sure we continue to invest and grow [women's XVs]. With the Wallaroos we've got a good opportunity."

"They performed really well in the WXV tournament recently so there's an opportunity

to get some good improvement. High performance isn't about gold plating, it's not about how much money you spend. You certainly need investment and resources but there are far greater things like integration, alignment and cohesion.

"But we do need to find some more investment and some more resourcing to accelerate that team as they go forward because that will inspire young girls to want to play the game."

The Wallaroos are set for a major change of the guard next year with coach Jay Treggion standing down after two years in charge.

In his place will be the team's first full-time coach, the new figure to work closely with Fernandez to set the side on the path for international success.

The Wallaroos' performances at the recent WXV tournament indicate there is a solid

platform to build on. Australia defeated France for the first time since 2010 and backed it up a week later to beat Wales. The only loss came to the fully-professional England side.

Fernandez hopes to finalise the new hire by the end of the year and looks forward to working with the coach to outline a vision for the sport.

"We want to be competing and fighting in that top-four space with the best nations," Fernandez said.

"That's [England], [New Zealand], the French, the Canadians, all those top nations. We want to be part of that and we want to win rugby matches."

"We want the public to be proud of what we do but most importantly I want the women to feel supported and valued and given the opportunity to be the best version of themselves."

'Rock star': Smith's Olympic motivation

GOLF

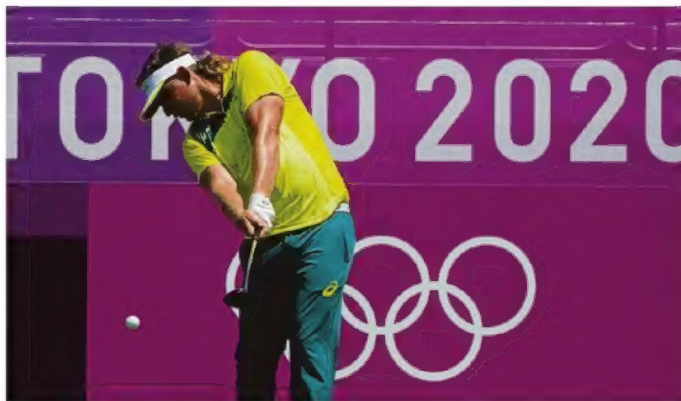
MARC Leishman believes the rules should be changed to allow a golfing "rock star" to feature at the Paris Olympics, but Cameron Smith is backing himself to earn selection regardless.

The pair wore Australian colours at the Tokyo Games two years ago, Smith flirting with the podium before finishing four shots off the pace in a tie for 10th.

It's likely only the top two-ranked Australian men will feature again in Paris next year.

Smith has faded from world No.2 to No.18 after two seasons with LIV Golf, the breakaway three-day tournament series that has repeatedly had its attempts to earn official world rankings points knocked back.

He's still the country's top-ranked male but the pack is closing fast.



Cameron Smith is mad keen to have another crack at Olympic gold in Paris.

The rejuvenated Jason Day (No.21) is next while Cameron Davis, Min Woo Lee, Adam Scott and Lucas Herbert are all inside the top 70 and consistently in the mix on the European and PGA Tours.

Only players inside the

world's top 60 will be eligible for qualification, with some forecasters predicting Smith to dip below that mark before the Olympic team is selected.

That's made defending his Australian PGA Championship at Brisbane's Royal

Queensland from Thursday, where rankings points will be earned, more important.

Unwelcome on the PGA Tour, Smith can also give his ranking a boost at the Australian Open at The Australian and The Lakes

clubs in Sydney next week, while he'll play all four majors next year before July's Games.

"Yeah I definitely want to be there, 100 per cent," the three-time Australian PGA champion and 2022 British Open winner said on Tuesday.

"I know the criteria, don't know if that can change."

"I've got these couple of events and four more looks again in the majors, so hopefully I can keep that ranking up."

"To wear the coat or arms on the chest again would be pretty special."

Smith said he'd even alter his schedule to chase ranking points on the Asian Tour, where he claimed second at the Hong Kong open earlier this month.

Leishman, without exemptions to play the four majors, has dropped outside

the world's top 400 since his move to LIV.

"(Tokyo was) one of the best weeks of my life ... (but) I don't think I'll be in it," he said of Paris.

"Hopefully they can do something so Cam can play ... hopefully if doesn't come off that world rankings."

"I think Cam's pretty clearcut the best Australian men's golfer at the moment and deserves to play at the Olympics."

"He's got a massive following all around the world now ... feeling like a bit of a rock star but still a humble winner and gracious loser."

Smith, Leishman, Scott, Davis, Lee and Herbert headline the local contingent this week while Poland's 2022 Australian Open champion Adrian Meronk has also returned to the course pegged as the Brisbane 2032 Olympic golf venue.

Adelaide find beauty in ugly win over North ahead of final

AFLW

ADELAIDE'S ugliest win of the AFLW season has become a thing of beauty as they prepare for a preliminary final against North Melbourne.

In round nine, Adelaide pipped the Kangaroos by three points in a result now giving the Crows fresh con-

fidence entering Sunday's high-stakes rematch.

Adelaide, in the October 29 fixture, lost all key statistics except the scoreboard.

North had more scoring shots, more disposals, 16 more inside 50s, more clearances - and led for all but five minutes.

But Adelaide coach Matthew Clarke's charges scored the last goal of the game to pinch a win.

"Doc (Clarke) said the stat sheet against North last time, they probably should have got up," Crows forward Jess Waterhouse said.

"But we were lucky and

were able to manage it in the last couple of minutes to make sure we came away with the win.

"It does give us confidence we can win in tough situations."

Waterhouse forecasts a hot contest against the Roos, who thrashed reigning

premiers Melbourne by 41 points in a qualifying final to earn hosting rights for the prelim.

The Crows fell to a two-point defeat to the Brisbane Lions in a qualifying final but rebounded convincingly to down Sydney by 67 points in their semi-final.



Jess Waterhouse

Top pick Reid eyes arm-wrestle with Dusty

AFL DRAFT

TEEN sensation Harley Reid isn't sure how his fend-off will match up against the famed stiff-arm of Richmond superstar Dustin Martin.

But the AFL's new No.1 draft pick, selected as the best young talent in the country by West Coast on Monday night, is eager to find out.

"I don't know, I'll have to test it out on him I reckon," Reid said.

"He's had that trademark and I've obviously looked at him and seen him do that and looked up to him because of it.

"That's something that he does really well and hopefully I can implement that in my game at the highest level too."

Reid is arguably the most-hyped draftee in AFL history, viewed by many recruiters and observers as a generational talent.

The 18-year-old is expected to help lift West Coast out of the doldrums after the club banked just five wins over the last two seasons.

"There's not too much expectation from me," Reid said.

"It's more get in there and learn the system and get introduced to how it is.

"Hopefully a few senior boys take me under their wing and teach me the ways.

"I'm not going to have a huge impact straight up.

"I'll just try to go through and play my best footy really."

Reid, from Tongala in Victoria's Goulburn Valley region, insists he has no qualms whatsoever about moving across the country to Perth, where he will start his AFL career alongside former Vic Country teammate Noah Long.

"There was a lot of uncertainty and he was someone I could lean on who has been through those shoes," Reid said of Eagles forward Long.

"He's been a great mentor for me."



Harley Reid says he is not feeling the weight of expectations as the number one draft pick heads west. Picture AAP

There's not too much expectation from me. It's more get in there and learn the system and get introduced to how it is.

Harley Reid

Reid is the third player taken by West Coast with the No.1 pick at a draft and the first this century.

The Eagles previously picked Drew Banfield (1992) and Michael Gardiner (1996) with the top selection.

West Coast fielded a series of trade offers from rival clubs for the No.1 pick but list manager Rohan O'Brien said it would have taken an "extraordinary" deal for them to pass up the opportunity to select Reid.

North Melbourne offered pick three and two later first-round selections, while Melbourne offered picks six, 11 and a future first-rounder.

"When you weigh that up around the trades that get done in trade period, they're really good offers, but we decided to stick

with the player," O'Brien said.

"For a lot of players you'd have to really consider them, and we did consider them.

"However pick one doesn't come along very often.

"We think Harley's a player that's a little bit unique.

"So whilst we thought about it, we were happy to stick with him in the end."

West Coast held the first selection - No.30 overall - when the second round of the draft started on Tuesday night.

Only four clubs did not have a selection in Monday's first round - the Brisbane Lions, Fremantle, Port Adelaide and Richmond.

Cats giant-killers 'just getting started' on building dynasty

AFLW

ONE step closer to the coveted premiership flag, Geelong believe they AFLW dynasty is about to begin.

The former rank outsiders have become giant-killers on their road to the grand final, knocking out defending premiers Melbourne by five points in a frantic semi-final.

Now they face another David and Goliath match, travelling to Brighton Homes Arena to take on competition heavyweights Brisbane in their first-ever preliminary finals appearance on Satur-

day. Brisbane will start firm favourites but the Cats' talented midfield will give the one-time premiers side cause for thought.

Lions coach Craig Starcevich was at Ikon Park to watch Nina Morrison dismantle the Demons' midfield while Amy McDonald slotted two early goals to set the tone.

When Morrison was off the ground with sore calves, Darcy Moloney, Julia Crockett-Grills and Renee Garing stood tall against a surging Melbourne attack.

Young winger Zali

Friswell believes their current midfield talent is just a taste of what is to come from Geelong.

"We just proved on the weekend that we can beat anyone, including the premiers," the 19-year-old told AAP.

"The development of the young girls that are coming through is producing a dynasty.

"We're just flying under the radar and we've got nothing to lose.

"In the next few years they'll hit their peak and I feel

like I'm just getting started."

As if booking a grand-final appearance wasn't enough incentive, the Cats will also be playing to extend Garing's career by one more match.

The inaugural Geelong midfielder has called time and will be retiring after seven years at the club.

"I'm not ready for it to be over just yet," Garing told AAP.

"I've been savouring every moment hoping that it will continue as long as possible and hopefully beyond this weekend."



Geelong teenager Zali Friswell believes the Cats can go all the way in the AFLW this season. Picture AAP

The Canberra Times

SPORT



THE EAGLE HAS LANDED

The No. 1 draft pick eyes arm-wrestle with Dusty

AFL: PAGE 47



RUGBY'S BIG LEAGUE DEALS

Cashed-up NRLW clubs threaten to poach stars

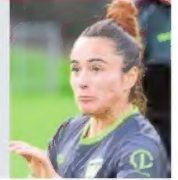
UNION: PAGE 46



'WE CAN DO MORE'

Canberra star calls for boost after World Cup

SOCCER: PAGE 42



IN PRIME POSITION

Bancroft puts hand up ahead of Manuka Oval shootout for Warner's Test spot

PAGE 45



Cameron Bancroft, right, is a big chance to replace former teammate David Warner, left, in the Australian Test team.
Picture AAP

Govt's precinct pitch to save AIS

INFRASTRUCTURE

Chris Dutton

THE ACT government wants to strike a three-way investment partnership to revitalise the AIS, revealing its vision for a "northside sport and health precinct" to ensure the facility remains in Canberra.

In a seven-page submission to a federal review of the AIS and its location, the government argued the AIS needed to stay in Canberra as the most "cost-efficient" way to impact athlete per-

formance for the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2032.

It also called for at least a \$200 million investment for the existing 64-hectare site at Bruce, and reiterated its intention to build a new stadium to help reinvigorate the AIS as a sporting hub.

The government's plan was sent to an independent review panel, which was set up by the Albanese government to address years of neglect and under-investment.

The review will examine the future of the AIS, the

funding needed to upgrade existing facilities and the prospect of a \$1 billion relocation to south-east Queensland. The review panel has met with Australian Sports Commission and ACT government staff in recent weeks, with a report to be presented to Infrastructure Minister Catherine King and Sport Minister Anika Wells by the end of the year.

The ACT government has been the loudest voice in the room, with all submissions due to the panel by Tuesday night. In an attempt

to stave off a poaching raid by Queensland, the ACT government has created a masterplan for Bruce, which includes the AIS, a stadium revamp, light-rail extension, hospital upgrades and education facilities. But to achieve its vision it wants to jointly fund the project with the federal government and University of Canberra.

"The AIS is pivotal to the development of Canberra's northside sport and health precinct, also encompassing the University of Canberra, Canberra Institute of Tech-

nology Bruce, UC Hospital and North Canberra Hospital," the government's submission said.

"This corridor is planned to be a dynamic precinct with one focus being on sport, including sport experience, sport science, sport participation and sport innovation."

"The Belconnen District Strategy supports this vision and sets up the precinct around Bruce to connect sport with community, businesses, research, education, leisure and entertainment, reinforcing the area as an ac-

tivated hub for high performance sport and innovation.

"Coordinated investment in this precinct by the ACT government, University of Canberra and the Australian government has the potential to enhance Australia's global reputation as a leader in sport, sports science and performance. A precinct of this nature would not be possible elsewhere in Australia."

Erin Flaherty and Robyn Smith will oversee the review, which was commissioned last month.

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